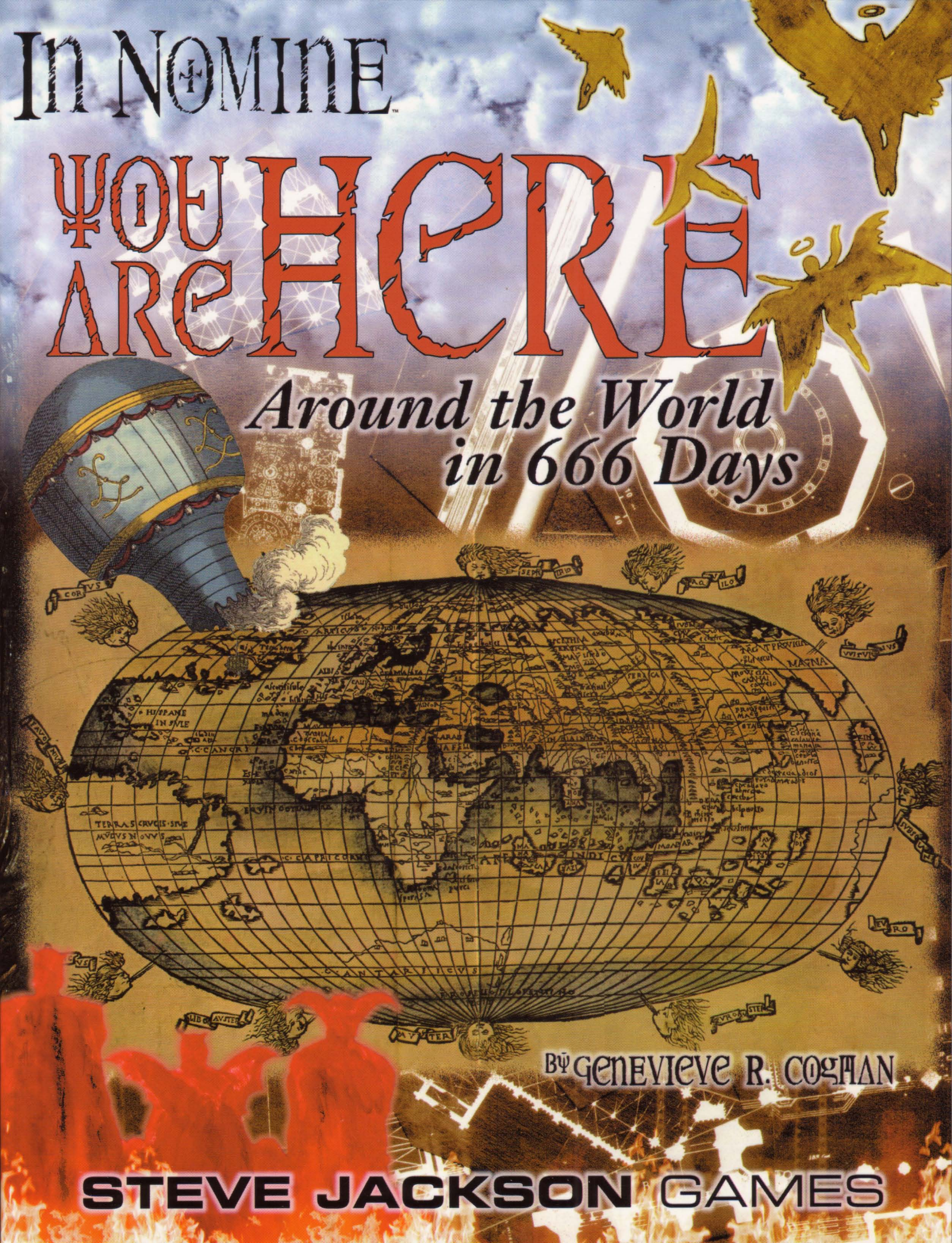


IN NOMINE

YOU ARE HERE

*Around the World
in 666 Days*



BY GENEVIEVE R. COFFMAN

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

AND US WITHOUT A MAP ...

*Across the Symphony, from Heaven to Hell, on Earth, and even in the Marches, there are places which have **meaning**. Such locations are more than just earth and stone – they're cared for or abhorred, worked in and lived in, **important** to people, and even more important to your characters!*

This book is full of different locations throughout the *In Nomine* world. They can be used as instant adventures in themselves, or worked into a campaign to add flavor: The secret projects of Demon Princes; the sacred areas protected by Archangels; Ethereal Domains etched into the global subconscious; purely human areas on Earth that the War hasn't touched yet – they're all here. Dozens of places hide secrets just waiting to be discovered!

For all the players who ask their GMs where they are, and all the GMs trying to give them an answer – *You Are Here*. Now the players just have to cope with it . . .



WARNING: This book is intended for mature readers. It contains interpretations of religious themes which some readers may find unsettling.



STEVE JACKSON GAMES
www.sjgames.com



Written by

Genevieve R. Cogman

Edited by

Robert M. Schroeck

Additional material by

Elizabeth McCoy

Cover design by

Philip J. Reed, Jr.

Illustrated by

John Grigni,
andi jones,
Ramón Pérez,
Fred Rawles,
Philip J. Reed, Jr.,
and Jason Walton

Additional illustrations by

Jesse DeGraff,
Glenn Grant,
Michael Harmon,
and Ray Lunceford

FIRST EDITION – AUGUST 1999.

You will need the *In Nomine* basic rulebook to play.

ISBN 1-55634-595-7



9 781556 345951

SJG01995 **3316**

Printed in the
U.S.A.



In Nomine was written by Derek Percy based on an original game by CROC, under license from Asmodée

IN NOMINE

YOU ARE HERE

Around the World in 666 Days



By Genevieve R. Cogman

Edited by Robert M. Schroeck

Additional material by Elizabeth McCoy

Cover design by Philip J. Reed, Jr.

Illustrated by John Grigni, andi jones, Ramón Pérez,
Fred Rawles, Philip J. Reed, Jr., and Jason Walton

Additional illustrations by Jesse DeGraff, Glenn Grant,
Michael Harmon, Ray Lunceford, and Dan Smith

Managing Editor ✕ Alain H. Dawson

Line Editor ✕ Elizabeth McCoy

Production ✕ Philip J. Reed, Jr.

and Alain H. Dawson

Print Buyer ✕ Russell Godwin

Art Director ✕ Loren Wiseman

Sales Manager ✕ Ross Jepson

Playtesters: Kathleen Avins, Eric Alfred Burns, Brian Cook,
David Edelstein, John Freiler, Owen S. Kerr, Perry M. Lloyd,
James Martin, Alison Mee, Michael Mihallik, Leath Sheales,
and Josh "Tafka J." Voth

*Special thanks to Emily Dresner and Jo Hart
for their vital inspirations.*

Some images courtesy of www.arttoday.com

In Nomine and *You Are Here* are trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. *Pyramid* and *Illuminati Online* and the names of all products published by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated are registered trademarks or trademarks of Steve Jackson Games Incorporated, or used under license. *You Are Here* is copyright © 1999 by Steve Jackson Games Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.



ISBN 1-55634-595-7

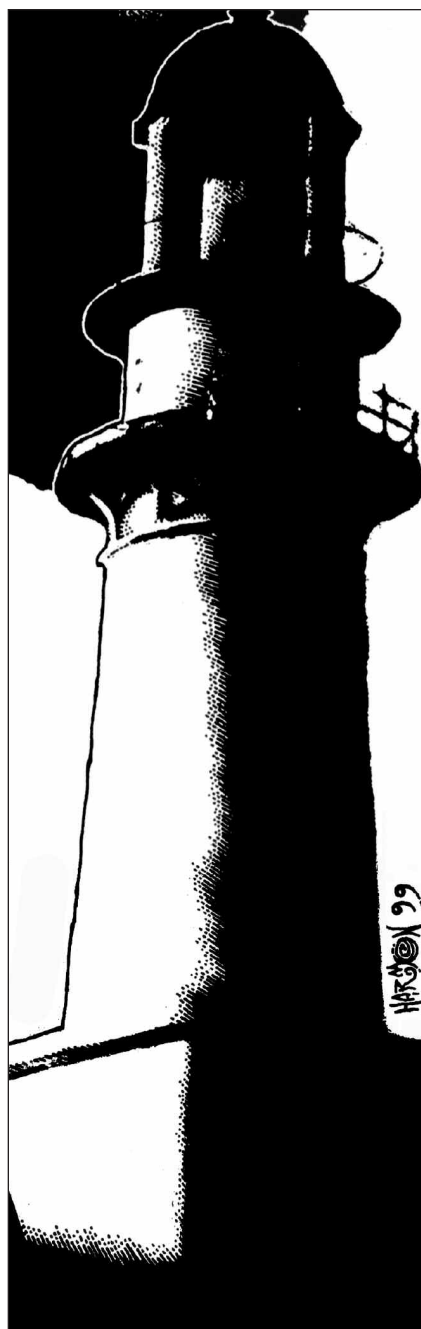
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STEVE JACKSON GAMES



YOU ARE HERE

Around the World in 666 Days



2

CONTENTS

ABOUT IN NOMINE 3

INTRODUCTION 4

We Only Go There
For the Coffee 5
Whither Shall I Wander? 5
That Place Over There 5

CORPOREAL LOCATIONS 6

The Control of Locations 7
As Time Passes 7
As the World Turns 7

ALIGNED WITH HEAVEN 8

Callison Bay Lighthouse 8
The Duckpond 9
The Eighth Virtue 10
The Flying Notre Dame 11
Foo.Bar.Com 12
Goldenrod Bookshop 13
Kites for all the Family 15
Shell Game 15
Laundromat 16
Libra Surveys 17
The Neon Palace 18
A Pet For All Seasons 20
Uphill Market Clothes Shop 21
Wave Point Cove 22

ALIGNED WITH HELL 24

Computing Science
Department 24
Dellman's Studios 26
Garden Dinosaurs
Manufacturers 27
Infectious Diseases Unit 29
Moss Dentistry 31
Public Parking Garage 32
Quik Drive 34
St. John's Orphanage 35
Stardust Cineplex 37
Suicide Prevention Center 38
Tombstone Arms 39
Vanx Pharmacy 40

DISPUTED TERRITORY 41

Archaic Antiques 41
Boy Scouts Hall 42
Scouts As Characters 43
City Airport 43
City Police Department 45
Fetish Footwear 48
Fire Station 49
Forge Coven 52
The Graveyard 54
Green Fields Kindergarten 56
The Kiwi Fruit Greenhouse 57
Mirchenko's 58
Nelson's Junkyard 60
Opps Apps 62
Parascientific
Investigations Library 63
Progressive Banking 65
The Rose Garden 66
Safe Shopping Supermarket 67
Seasonal Publishing 69
The Simon Henderson
Local History Museum 71
Wilson Private Detectives 73

CELESTIAL LOCATIONS 74

The Naming of Locations 75
Traveling Between Locations 75

HEAVEN 76

The Butterfly Hills 76
The Clockwork Counter
of the Names of God 77
Coffee Central 78
The Corridor of Histories 79
General Records 81
Groves Basic Training 83
The Movable Paradise 84
The Passion Play 85
Quiet Willows 86
The Remembrances of

Holy Fear 87
The Room of Contemplation 88
The Vanishing Rooms 89
The Walls of Names 90

HELL 91

Bang Bang All
Same Hardware Shop 91
Bracelet Bodyguards 93
Bulletin Boards 94
Bunker 666 96
Chthonic Chorography 97
The Fair Chance 98
The Great Clock 99
Labor Grounds 100



The Museum of the Dreams of Murderers	101
The Pits	102
Principality Papers	104
Red Silks	106
The Shal-Mari Metro	108
Suffering Succotash	110
The Talking Heads	111

LOCATIONS IN THE ARCHES

The Naming of Domains	113
Traveling Between Domains	113

ETHEREAL LOCATIONS

Arachnidae	114
The Camp	115
The Country of the Teind	119
The Crags of the Guardians of the Vale	120
The Dry River	123

ABOUT *IN NOMINE*

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *In Nomine* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for *In Nomine*. It also covers all the hobby's top games – *AD&D*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun*, and many more – and other SJ Games releases like *GURPS*, *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures*, and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

New supplements and adventures. *In Nomine* continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *In Nomine* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web – see below.

Q&A. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata, and hundreds of pages of information. Illuminati Online supports SJ Games with discussion areas for many games, including *In Nomine*. Here's where we do a lot of our playtesting! Dial 512-485-7440 at up to 33.6K baud – or telnet to io.com. You can get specific information about this book at www.sjgames.com/in-nomine/youarehere.

Mailing List. Much of the online discussion of *In Nomine* happens on our e-mail list. To join, send e-mail to majordomo@lists.io.com with the line “subscribe in_nomine-l” in the body.

In Nomine IRC. We also support online roleplaying channels for *In Nomine*. If you'd like to start a MOO or similar Internet environment for gaming *In Nomine*, please go to www.sjgames.com/in-nomine/angelmush.html to check out our policy information.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

GENIUS LOCI	124
DEJA VU	125

LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

IT WAS A SOUVENIR	126
-------------------------	-----

INDEX



INTRODUCTION



Malchiel shouldered through the crowd, ducked an enthusiastic sweep from a pool cue, and sat down with a sigh of relief at the corner table. He set down two glasses of beer: "There."

Henadad took a swig of the beer before saying, "Thanks."

"No problem." Malchiel shifted in his seat to look around at the other Malakim. He wondered how many of them were carrying concealed weapons, then rejected the thought. All of them, of course.

"So," said Henadad, propping his elbows on the table, "tell me this theory of yours about naming places." He grinned. "I suppose I should expect it from a brother of Destiny."

Malchiel tilted his head. "You sure? You'll complain that I'm breaking your head again."

Henadad shook his head. "No, no. I owe you for getting the beer anyhow. Enlighten me. Educate this poor foolish Virtue of War."

Malchiel thought for a moment. "OK. All places are discrete. Every spot, every area, every single location that exists or that ever has existed is a discrete spot."

Henadad blinked. "Discreet? Quiet?"

Malchiel shook his head. "No, **discrete**. Separate. A thing entirely on its own, whatever size it is. OK? So this table here, that's a place. But places can include each other. This whole bar's a place. It's two places, in a sense, because it's the One-Eared Dog normally, but it's the Eighth Virtue tonight. And this country includes the bar. And Earth includes the country. And they're all places."

Henadad nodded. "Everywhere's separate. Right. Though that's not very Symphonic."

Malchiel shrugged. "They connect, they lie inside each other, they are each other. The point is in naming them. You see, you just have to find the defining factors." He drank some of his beer absently. "You can define a place in terms of its geographical location . . ."

"You're lecturing," Henadad pointed out.

Malchiel waved a hand vaguely, caught up in his explanation. "Or in terms of the people who live there, the things that have happened there, the things that are happening there, the terrain, the wildlife, the plant life, everything. If you apply enough modifiers, any location can be identified **precisely**."

"But what's the point?" Henadad asked. "All right, I can see that it's useful to be able to name and describe a place for strategic planning. What I **don't** get is why you – why all of Destiny – need to say that locations have names. I mean, what's the point? A place is a place is a place. In Heaven or Earth or Hell. In the Marches. What matters is what you do there."

Malchiel shook his head. "You're missing the point. What matters is that they all exist, connected to each other – because, yes, you **have** got the Symphony – and are discrete and independent locations. This bit of road. That bit of road. A library in Heaven. A brothel in Hell. And because they all exist, they all **matter**."

Henadad sighed. "You were right. You **have** broken my head."

WE ONLY GO THERE FOR THE COFFEE

Any area where characters spend time can be of interest to them – it may provide vital services, be useful terrain to control, or the scene of an investigation. Despite their celestial connections, not all Tethers are interesting places, and not all interesting places are Tethers. A laundromat may conceal drug-traffickers, a school playground may hide a sorcerous altar, and a lighthouse may be manned by a guardian angel. Locations are defined by the people who inhabit them, the geographical location, and the events taking place there – all of which are subject to change.

WHITHER SHALL I WANDER?

Characters will often wish to stay inside their nice safe little circles, avoiding new encounters which the GM may have crafted with loving care and attention. While this desire to spare the GM time and effort is extremely thoughtful, it can be awkward if they are simultaneously demanding action. However, every human life – and thus, every Role – involves at least some regular locations. Where is a Servitor of Death going to wash his clothes after that recent zombi jamboree in the local graveyard? Where is a Servitor of Flowers going to find a job in primary school teaching? How exactly do the Servitors of Judgment propose to retrieve that relic which the police have just bagged and taken away as evidence – especially if there are celestials from both sides working at the police station?

Just as the characters' own homes are secret repositories of virtue or vice – after all, *celestial beings* live there – so any Corporeal location can have hidden depths: angels and demons may wage secret wars to control it, ethereals may plot to reestablish themselves through it, humans may use it as an outpost to do their own good or their own evil. Equally, Heaven and Hell and the Marches all hold places of interest, from secret Princely hiding places to the last outposts of Purity, from demonic museums to angelic prisons. Even if the celestials don't need to go there for some service that the place provides, they may find themselves having to investigate the area to locate a contact, or to foil the work of the enemy . . .

THAT PLACE OVER THERE

Actions don't take place in a vacuum. If a being is doing *something*, then he is doing it *somewhere* – not necessarily in a Tether, but definitely in a unique place, with its own inhabitants and geography. Such areas may seem generic enough until a character actually does something to attract the attention of an unusual local



. . . but all places have their own secrets. Within these pages are an assortment of locations, ranging from the mundane to the exotic, in Heaven, Earth, Hell, or Dreams, ready to be slotted into any campaign. Whether it's something as minor as a pilfering cashier, or as major as multiple murder, no location is lacking in interest – and celestials need to learn that.

And of course, they then get to interact with the inhabitants, make investigations, take any appropriate actions, sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind . . .

CORPOREAL LOCATIONS



6

CORPOREAL LOCATIONS

THE CONTROL OF LOCATIONS

On Earth, it is rare for any given location to be totally under the control of Heaven or Hell – or even ethereal spirits or other forces. Even Tethers, the outposts of sanctity or depravity, are inhabited by mortals, who have a thousand different opinions. Whether the celestials like it or not, Earth is full of humans and animals, and they can bring virtue or vice into the most carefully controlled location.

This means that although some locations are *broadly* under the control of Heaven or Hell, in practical terms there is always room for another faction. Very few places cannot be infiltrated, betrayed, or simply wandered into. And even if a few places are so very tightly controlled, they are far too likely to be *obvious* angelic or demonic outposts. To be too obvious is a dangerous thing . . .

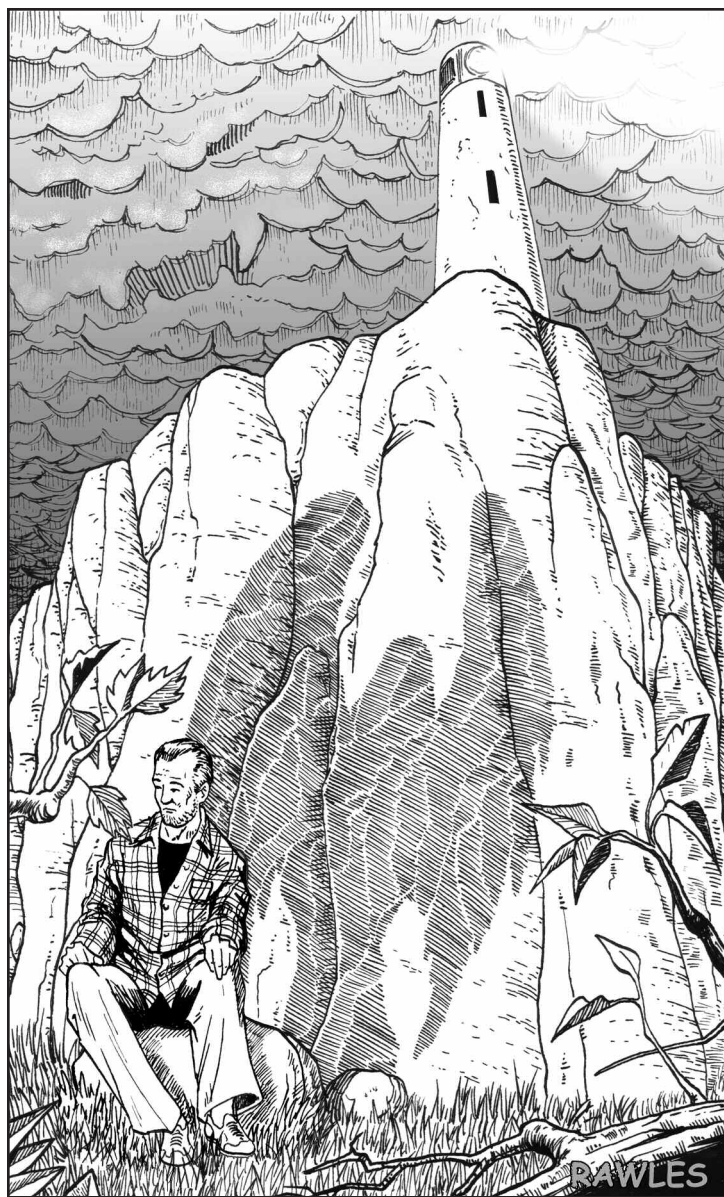
However, the infiltration of angels and demons – and others – into the corporeal world has resulted in many of them establishing themselves in places other than Tethers. These locations are useful in the War, as are the beings who inhabit them. Many have become microcosms of the War in themselves, demonstrating the struggle between Good and Evil. (Of course, opinions as to which side is which depends upon who you ask.) And humans and animals themselves create areas that are of interest to celestials, working out the Destiny or Fate of the Symphony in their own way and their own time . . .

AS TIME PASSES

Many of the listed locations have several opposing factions in a state of controlled tension, or have possible events forthcoming that will cause disruptions. In these cases, it is up to the GM to decide when and how he wishes to trigger them. He may wish to keep the situation stable for a while, and allow the characters to get to know the place before setting events in motion. On the other hand, he may prefer to let them walk into a situation of open battle or disaster.

AS THE WORLD TURNS

The GM may also wish to remember that these locations do not exist in a *void*. They are often in the middle of busy towns, and surrounded by living beings – humans, animals, and even celestials. Any disturbance will be noticed, and people who connect in some way with the location will be affected by it. If a bank is destroyed, then everyone who invests in it or who saves money in it will be shaken by the impact (and Servitors



of Trade, if involved, had better have a *very* good excuse). If strange people hang around the playground of the local kindergarten, this will provoke reactions from parents, teachers, and ultimately, policemen . . .

Also, if a location is of enough interest for celestial forces to be actively investigating it, then it becomes quite possible that *other* groups may also be poking around. Locations which are of interest to Heaven as possible strong or weak points are interesting to Hell for precisely the same reasons. Both sides will definitely look into supernatural or strange events. While many of these are false trails, enough of them are true to make them worth pursuing. Basically, *any* place that has attracted the interest of one group may attract the attention of others.

ALIGNED WITH HEAVEN



CALLISON BAY LIGHTHOUSE

The elderly man grunted, "No. This here ain't some sort of prettified village site, mister. It ain't no sort of picture neither. It's a durmed big rock with a lighthouse on it."

A lighthouse overlooks Callison Bay, rooted in the cliffs above. The first of its kind was built by early Pilgrim settlers, and many of the original stones are incorporated in the current structure, which is the third to stand here. It is one of the few lighthouses still to have a human keeper. The lighthouse keeper is an elderly man, Brian Matson, visited from time to time by his son – and by groups of tourists, who are given the minimum of civility. Brian Matson will tell them that there were never any native settlements in the area that *he's* ever heard of, and that there's nothing except the lighthouse to see.

Brian Matson is lying through his teeth. He's a Cherub of Stone, and his true name is Balin. He was posted here shortly after the lighthouse was first built. His mission was to guard the area, and he's held the post of lighthouse keeper for 150 years now. He regularly fakes the existence of a "son" with the help of some other Servitor of Stone, then "dies" and returns as his own "son" to take over the job.

Balin's mission is not so much to watch over the nearby town as it is to watch over the cliff on which the lighthouse is built. This is because there *was* a native tribe in the area, for over 1,000 years, and the cliff is a Tether to their malevolent wind god (which was known to many North American tribes, by many names, including "Wendigo"). Although that tribe was driven away during the settling of America, the place is still a very weak Tether – and could still be used, if given appropriate ceremonies to reawaken it.

David has certain philosophical objections to destroying large rock cliffs. He decided to put a guardian over it, in order to drive away anybody foolish enough to try and reopen the Tether. It's his hope that the Tether will eventually lose all power, and that its link to the Marches will die. In the meantime, Balin has a nice peaceful job, very much to his taste.

There is, however, a problem in the making. Richard Smithers, a student anthropologist from a well-known university, is visiting the area in the hopes of finding some material – any material – for an article. He's well-meaning and enthusiastic, and trained enough to be able to see traces of previous native settlements if allowed to examine the area. Coupling that evidence with historical material in his university library, he'll be able to produce an intelligent article that will make it into a historical journal. This will be enough to alert a Servitor of Beleth to come and investigate the area, who will *certainly* be able to locate the usable Tether . . .

Balin, Cherub of Stone, Lighthouse Keeper

Balin appears as a grizzled man in his late 50s, and enjoys sitting on the rocks around the lighthouse foundations and listening to the waves on the shoreline below. Fuel for the lighthouse is regularly delivered by truck, so he only has to leave the place once a month to stock up on supplies. If he had his way, he'd never have to deal with *people* at all – he's brusque, rough, and very critical of anybody who can't manage outdoors. While he realizes that his job is one of vigilance, he hasn't had to cope with demons in almost a century. He wouldn't be sure how to handle modern publicity or technology if there were some sort of genuine inrush of attention around the lighthouse.

THE DUCKPOND

The Seraph was doing his best not to look at the seething mass in front of him. He pulled another handful of bread scraps from his bag blindly, and threw it to the ducks.

"With feeling," the Mercurian cautioned him. "We're supposed to be here undercover, remember."

"Ducks," the Seraph muttered. "Why did it have to be ducks?"

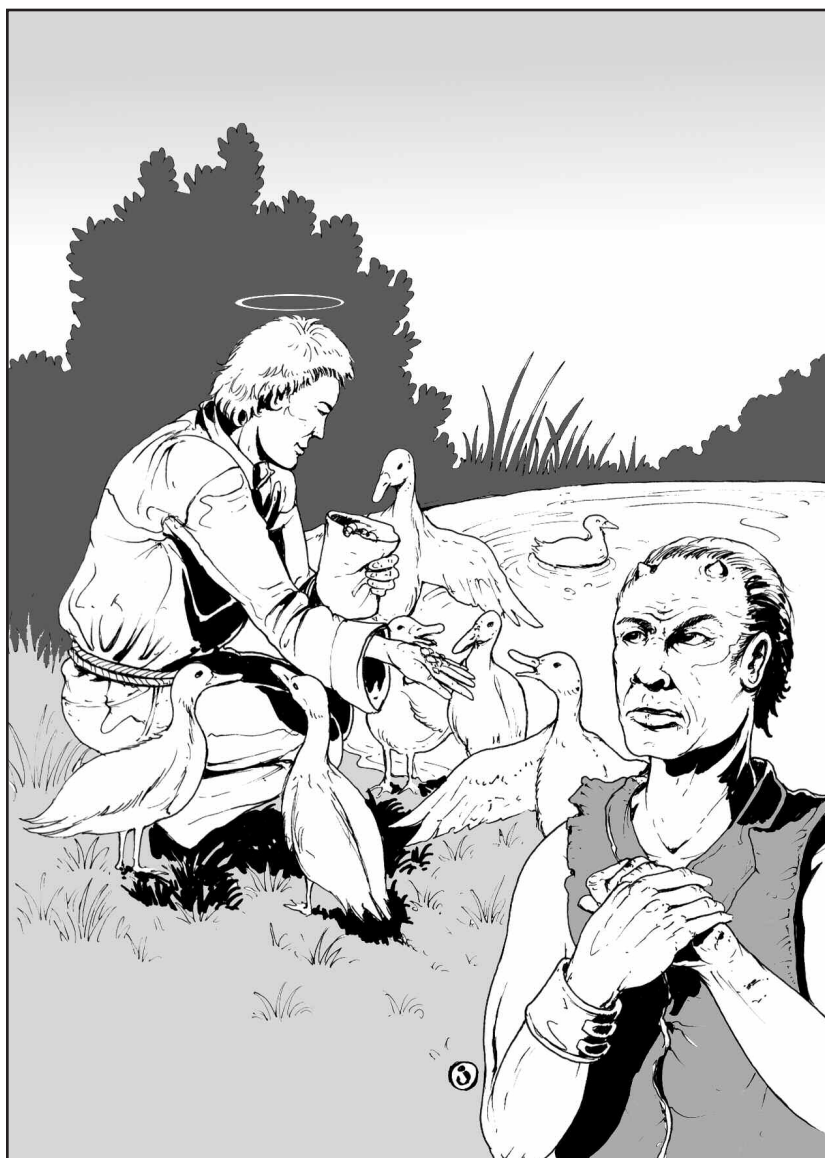
In a city park there is a duckpond. It contains water and ducks – but there's more to it than that.

The duckpond is a nexus for families with young children. The kids, after all, *love* feeding the ducks. People from different ethnic backgrounds and social classes can meet and talk while the children are busy running around, shrieking, and throwing bread to the swans, ducks, and geese. There are a number of sturdy benches set up around the pond, where parents can sit and watch to make sure the kids don't get into trouble.

More than that, the duckpond is an area for older people to gather. Sitting around on the benches, they can discuss how much better things were in their day and the failings of the younger generation. As they relax in the afternoon sun and the pleasant surroundings, they can rebuild the pleasant days of the past, finding the comfort that dreams bring.

Watching over this area is Elias Zalman, a Saint of Blandine's, only recently reborn and currently a 15-year-old boy. Of course, having to attend school and have a family life is something of a cramp in his style . . . but he manages. One of the rare Saints aware of his nature from birth, he knows that this area is valuable to the neighborhood. Fortunately he has a talent for art, which gives him an excuse to spend spare time here, sketching the pond and nearby people.

Given their frequent feeding, the waterfowl have grown very tame. They won't *quite* go so far as to take food from the hands of visitors, but they will swim to the edge of the pond if anybody is standing there. The ducks will then look up at the hapless visitors, and quack loudly in the hopes of scraps. The geese are even noisier. While they will eventually go away if no food is forthcoming, it will take several minutes for them to grow disappointed.



The collection of waterfowl is impressive, and there are a couple of noticeboards next to the pond with names of the different breeds and illustrations. There are two pairs of swans, several pairs of geese, and 46 ducks, ranging from brilliantly colored mandarins to drab black coots. Visiting pigeons also hang around on the pond in winter, finding food scarce elsewhere in the city, and share in any bread that may be forthcoming.

While there have been no demonic attempts to meddle in this area for a while, it has been noted among Servitors of Fate and of Factions as a trouble spot. It promotes tolerance, friendship, and the remembrance of past happiness. As such, it is intolerable. Fortunately, it shouldn't be that hard for them to arrange some way of removing it . . .

Elias Zalman, Saint of Blandine

Elias is a faithful and sincere soul, but is trying to reconcile the demands of his "normal" life and schoolwork with the demands of his duty as a Saint. This is his first return to Earth after his death, and he was warned it would be difficult. He didn't realize *how* difficult. His intentions are pure, and he is in no danger of losing his faith or purpose, but he finds it very hard to go through all the minor pains of life when he knows he has a greater purpose. The youngest child of a local Jewish family, he is regarded by them as a good and loving boy.

THE EIGHTH VIRTUE

"It's not the attempts to blow up the pub," the Mercurian muttered. "It's not the fact that every second person in the room is clanking with weapons. It's not even the constant resonating. It's the fact that they're the only ones who can damn well get the bartender's attention."

Somewhere on Earth, there's a bar. Actually, there are many bars, and most of the good ones will be "The Eighth Virtue" some year. All that's required is a staff that minds its own business, a large back room, and good drinks. Then, for that evening – from sunset to sunrise – the bar is "The Eighth Virtue" to the patrons of that back room.

Because for that span of time, the bar is home to the semi-annual roving Malakim convention.

It's not a *big* gathering – it doesn't draw every Malakite on Earth, just the local ones. There's only a dozen or two at the main party at any one time, but nobody keeps count of all the Virtues dropping in briefly to hoist a pint. Servitors of the harsher Superiors don't always hear where the next Eighth Virtue is going to be; it's always a nuisance to have some Dominican making notes about how much beer you drank at the party. Besides, they're usually too busy. But it's one of the places where Choir can transcend Word, and a pair of Malakim can swap stories without hearing hisses of "Hyena!" and "Prideful ruffian!"



Malakim find it a great place to network, keeping in touch with their Choirmates, or even planning joint operations to eliminate local trouble. It's also a chance to relax and swap tales of great and honorable exploits, or learn a trick or two for combat.

You don't have to be a Malakite to attend, but one of the attending Virtues has to vouch for you. (If you need help, that's different. Just show up and explain that there's evil to be slain.) Traditionally, a Malakite gets to bring one guest – Saint, Soldier, or some other Choir. Mundanes are not allowed, as they dampen the conversation, and anyone escorted by a Virtue is assumed to be aware of the War.

Just about any Malakite can show up at the Eighth Virtue, from the most recently-fledged angel to ancient Word-bound. So far, though, no Archangels are ever *known* to have attended.

Traditionally, at least one member of the last meeting (who stayed from dusk till dawn) is present at the next. This is usually the one who was responsible for deciding on the bar and date to be used. If you don't attend, you can't guarantee that the next one will be in your home town.

Some demons have heard of the Eighth Virtue, and would love to plant some explosives in the chosen bar. Wiping out several of the Host's more annoying members would be just the thing to make a demon feel all warm and cozy inside. Of course, the last person to try bombing the Eighth Virtue is still contemplating his Heart, but an infernal can dream . . .

Another option some consider is trying to infiltrate, posing as a Malakite. In the middle of a dozen or so real Malakim, all of whom consider resonating someone for his honorable deeds to be the usual verification of identity . . .

Most of the demonic hordes, though, would keep their heads down if they heard of a Malakim convention in the area. Sensibly, too: it's common for the less-peaceful attendees to take a break from the party and head out for some recreational evil-smiting. When there's a Calabite who's just too big for you to take on alone, it helps to have a half-dozen of your Choir backing you up. It's considered rude to bring evil back for your buddies at the bar, though, as it implies that they're choosing to do something (i.e., party) other than slay it.

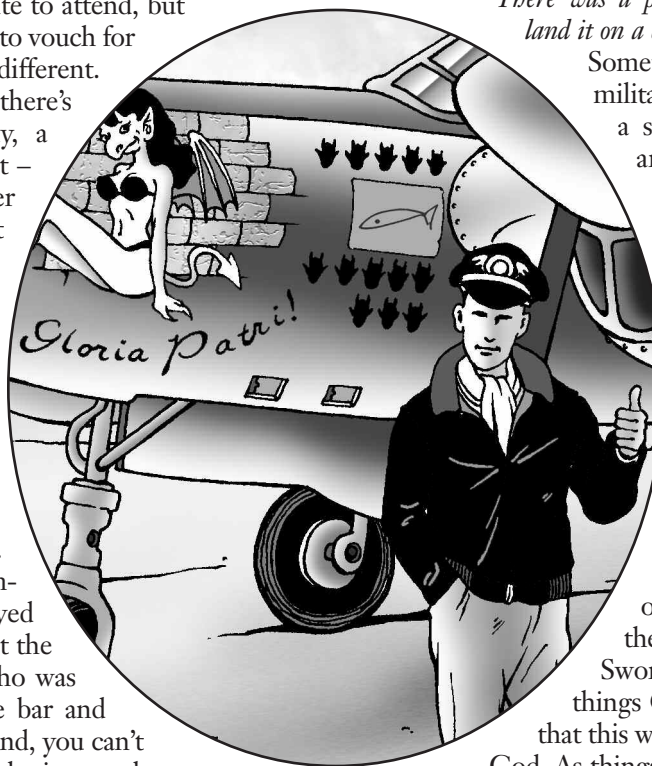
THE FLYING NOTRE DAME

"I thought you said this was supposed to be camouflaged!"

"It is camouflaged."

*"Where on earth is this going to be **camouflage**?"*

There was a pause. "Well, you could always land it on a cathedral roof . . ."



Sometimes Laurence or another militant Archangel needs to move a squad of troops somewhere, and can't do it by Tether.

Perhaps because the group includes Soldiers, perhaps because there's no convenient Tether at the other end – but in any case, the soldiers have to get there, fast. That's when he calls on the Flying Notre Dame. This airplane, converted and upgraded from a standard US Air Force troop transport, is piloted by Velox, an Ofanite of Janus. He was recruited to the task by two Servitors of the Sword who noted his love of all things Catholic, and persuaded him that this would be the perfect service to God. As things are, Velox gets to fly planes very fast *and* do it in a highly religious atmosphere.

He enjoys himself.

The Flying Notre Dame appears, from a distance, to be marked in gray camouflage patterns. Close up, it becomes evident that it's actually meant to look like stonework – and has gargoyles painted on over the turbines. This causes much amusement if it needs civilian refuelling. There's a large neon orange cross inscribed on the underbelly of the machine, and the Lord's Prayer has been stencilled onto the door of the parachute bay. The whole thing is elegant but hardly subtle – then again, it's not *meant* to be subtle. It's meant to be fast, effective, and if it puts the fear of God into people, that doesn't hurt.

The decoration of the interior of the plane is in the same style. The windows have been replaced by stained glass, the chairs all include kneelers, and there's a confessional just behind the cockpit. The air freshener smells of incense, and there is a stock of Bibles in one of the supply cupboards. (Unfortunately, Velox had very little sense of proportion when it comes to outfitting the plane. Most Soldiers of God who come aboard take it as a compliment to the Catholic faith – which *is* what it was meant as – and pray that some day he'll tone down the incense.)



While Laurence is Velox's main customer, other Archangels also use him when they need to ship Soldiers of God or angels somewhere around the world. This can result in the Flying Notre Dame turning up anywhere from Vietnam to Area 51, from Yugoslavia to Brazil, with a cargo hold full of Soldiers. Velox also does evacuations if necessary, and in those cases will land wherever he needs to to drop off people who he's carrying. The Flying Notre Dame is naturally a prime target for demons. Those Servitors of Hell not provoked into immediate flight for cover by its appearance will shortly be aiming any nearby weapons at it.

Velox, Ofanite of Janus, Pilot

Velox is an old Ofanite of Janus who can remember back when the Church's horseback couriers were the fastest things on the roads. He's very fond of the Catholic Church – it's not that he believes in it, but he thinks it's a beautiful invention, and very *good* for humans. He honestly can't see any reason not to cooperate with Laurence, as he gets to do what he's best at, for a very good cause. Appearing as a twitchy young Japanese man, he whistles themes from church anthems between his teeth while flying. He has *several* Roles as freelance or military air pilots, and uses whichever one is most effective. He's currently wondering if some of the advanced technology that Jean's been producing, of the "black science" type, could be used to speed up his plane. Of course, it's harder to decorate flying saucers appropriately, but . . .

FOO.BAR.COM

While the bartender prepared the drinks, the waitress tapped on the computer terminal – but not to prepare the bill. If anyone except the waitress had looked, they would have seen an e-mail program on the screen, but to her eyes . . .

The Foo.Bar.Com line of cybercafes (or so it's known among Servitors of Lightning) is a secret tool of Jean's, designed to keep an eye on the humans. The cafes are all basically similar in design, but have different names and are owned by different organizations, to avoid demons tracing the entire chain.

This Foo.Bar.Com is open and airy, with a few booths, a couple of video games, the bar, and several tables. Potted plants are scattered about, seemingly at random. The TV behind the bar is constantly playing SF movies and re-runs – only rarely does it get changed to an actual TV-feed, and even then, never to sports. Each table has a terminal which the patrons can use to connect to the Net, and there is a back room for video conferences. The cybercafe has "drinking" and "non-drinking" sides, divided by low walls. Beyond the video conferencing room, there are restrooms, an office for the manager, and an employees-only area. Upstairs are living quarters for the managing angel.

In this particular cybercafe, the bartender is Bezekiah, EloHITE of Lightning, with the earthly identity of "Buzz" Zechs. Among the waitresses is Amana, Seraph of Lightning, under the identity of Elsa Sanchez – her Role is that of a student working as a waitress, so she is

also able to watch the local university. The other humans who work there are unaware mundanes, but provide possible hosts for visiting Kyriotates – as does the aquarium.

The cybercafe has little speaker-microphones at the tables, ostensibly for taking orders, but which can be turned on to spy on the patrons. They aren't on *all* the time, of course – that would be data overload, even for the information packrats of Lightning. Amana often records interesting conversations to resonate on later.

The angels who manage a Foo.Bar.Com make weekly e-mail reports to one of Jean's Tethers, detailing social and technological trends, and any suspected infernal activity. They also receive orders to start, stop, or guide trends subtly. Servitors of Lightning know that the *chain* is owned by their Boss, and therefore any one of the cafes (if its local identity is known) can be a safehouse if the angel is in dire straits. Jean frowns on the cafes being used *too* much as shelters in times of trouble, simply because he doesn't want them targeted by demons. Foo.Bar.Com is more a place to spy on humanity than an outpost to wage war on demons – even Vapulan ones.

Still, after a hard day of battling evil, even angels can appreciate a good cup of coffee.

Bezekiah, EloHITE of Lightning, Bartender

Bezekiah is a typical 9-Force EloHITE of Lightning, heavier on the Celestial side than the Corporeal. His job, after all, isn't to enter physical combat, but to observe the patrons . . . and give them a subtle push if necessary. Like many Elohim, he uses Emote skill to display appropriate feelings, no matter how detached he really is. To him, the whole cybercafe is a job, and a fascinating experiment – but nothing more.

Amana, Seraph of Lightning, Waitress

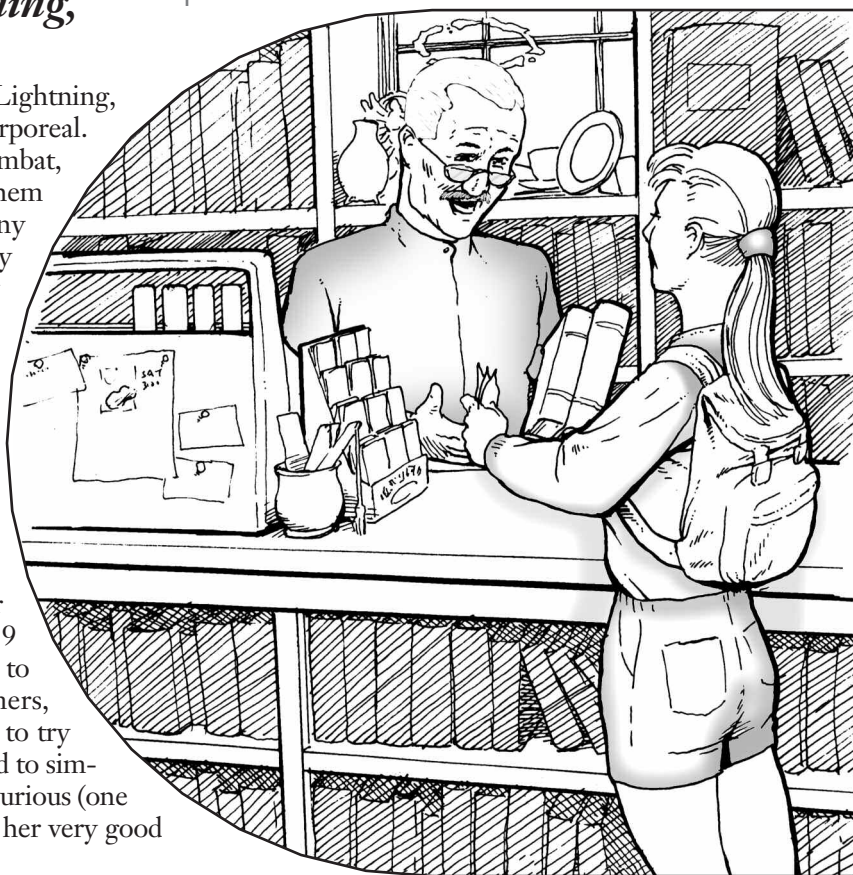
Amana is not unhappy with her Role, realizing that *somebody* has to do the dirty work of enduring human society in order to detect its lies. Like Buzz, she has 9 Forces, with a high Perception. Her task is to eavesdrop shamelessly on the customers, assembling all the details of conversations to try and spot Vapulan interference – as opposed to simply human bad technology. Her naturally curious (one might even say prurient) tendencies make her very good at it.

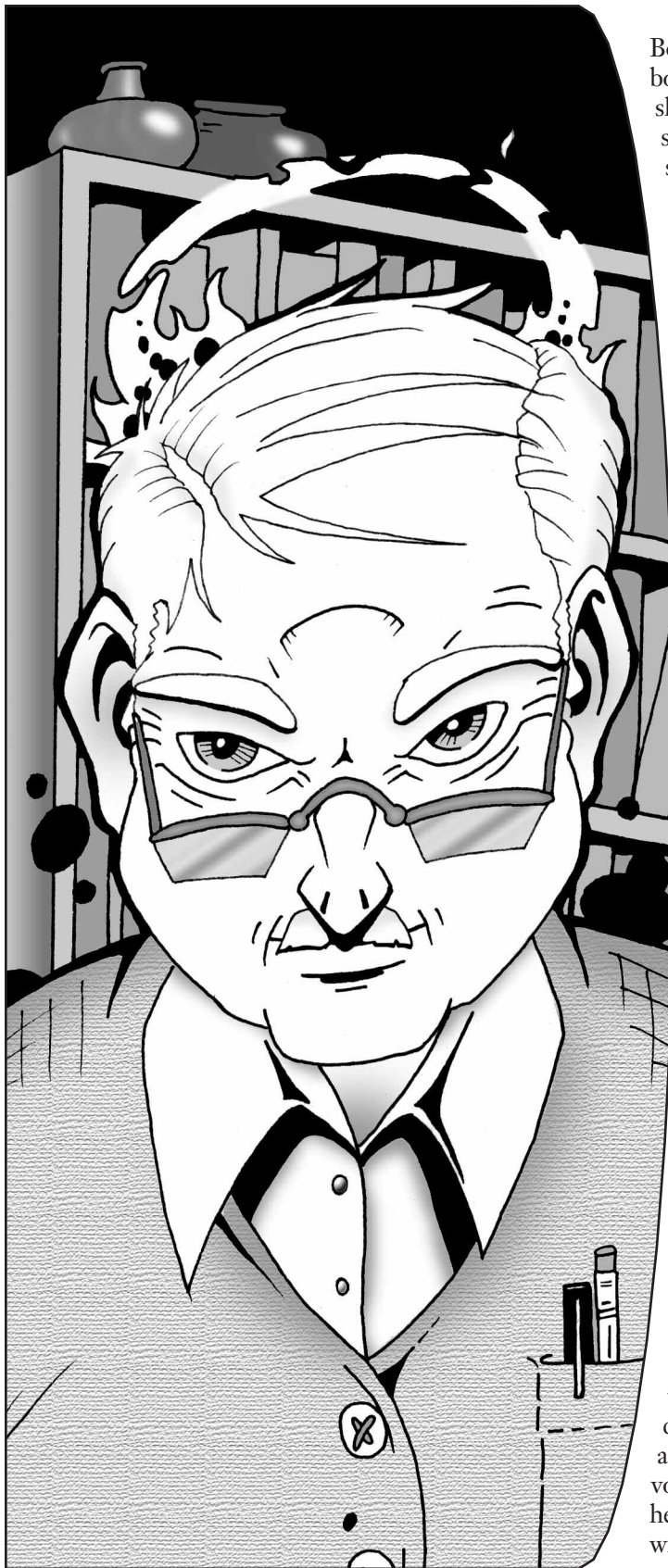
GOLDENROD BOOKSHOP

"Peace be upon you," the old man murmured, closing the door of the bookshop behind a young woman. Her rucksack bounced on her back, full of texts.

Goldenrod Bookshop is a small shabby-looking theological bookshop sandwiched between two higher buildings. The outside facade hasn't been painted for five years or more, and litter collects in the gutter. The window is small and murky, showing stacks of books inside that nearly block the view. The door creaks as it opens, and visitors must wipe their feet on a mat before entering the shop proper.

Inside, neatness and order becomes evident. The full bookcases are laid out through the ground floor in a symmetrical pattern resembling an Elizabethan knot garden. Near the door is a desk behind which sits the proprietor of the shop, Ishaq al-Nasir. Al-Nasir is always ready to debate philosophy and religion with an interested customer. While a devout Muslim himself – he will admit that once he trained as a Sufi – he can argue the religions of the People of the Book (Christianity and Jews) nearly as well. His level of knowledge on other religions varies, but he has a particular preference for Zoroastrianism and Manicheanism.





The local universities all know about Goldenrod Bookshop, and students are often referred there to find books for their courses. Al-Nasir has grown used to such shoppers, and can point a student at the usual shelves as soon as he mentions his professor's name. He also has several of the local religious leaders as semi-regular visitors – for them he'll fetch out his coffeepot and provide refreshments while they dispute faiths.

What al-Nasir doesn't realize himself is that he was once Jahdiel, a Cherub of Fire. His Role was that of a Sufi, a frequent visitor to the bookshop, with the task of protecting a local imam. He encountered an old enemy; they fought and Jahdiel lost his Celestial Forces, becoming a Remnant. Partly amnesiac, he believed that he *was* a human and a Sufi. The previous owner of the bookshop left al-Nasir the property and books in his will. When Jahdiel's Heart shattered in Heaven, the other angels of Fire thought that he was truly dead, and mourned his passing.

Unfortunately, there is one person who knows where to look for him – Shamhuth, the Shedite of Belial who fought Jahdiel before. Shamhuth was badly damaged itself after that fight, and spent 30 years regaining its Prince's favor. While it believes that it destroyed Jahdiel before, it'll want to check the area to be sure, and will be furious to find the Cherub still alive. But how can it cause the once-Cherub any *true* pain when the Remnant doesn't even realize what he is? Its aim will be to try and lure some angels into the neighborhood, and to cause them to find Jahdiel and awaken him to his nature – and then, once he understands, to finally destroy him.

***Jahdiel,
Remnant Cherub of Fire,
Bookshop Owner***

Jahdiel appears as a sturdy man in his 60s. His white hair is thinning, and he wears appropriate clothing for his age and position as a shop owner. He also affects steel-rimmed spectacles – not because he needs them, but because he's found that they get a better reaction from fractious student visitors. He is a genuinely kind and helpful person, very protective of his bookshop and his friends, and a practicing Muslim. He's rationalized the gaps in his memory as due to an "automobile accident"; in the fight with Shamhuth, he was knocked into a passing car. He is entirely happy where he is, among his volumes of theology and arguments with friends. Should he be presented with clear proof of what he actually is, he will be saddened, but will accept it as the will of Allah.

KITES FOR ALL THE FAMILY

"But I told you about it yesterday!" the boy complained. The shopkeeper slapped her head theatrically. "I'll forget my own name next."

This craft shop specializes in kites and the materials to make them. Great butterfly-shaped constructions hang in the window, attracting children passing by. Little stands of pinwheels are set by the door, with a notice to say they're free to any customer wanting to take one. Paper elegances dangle from the ceiling just above the heads of customers. The whole impression is of a riot of color and movement.

The owner – Jenny Hawthorne – carefully orchestrates this impression. A tall woman, she has black hair with half a dozen colors striped into it, and wears a t-shirt and spandex pants all year through. (In cold weather she throws a red blanket poncho over herself, for an effect that cannot be easily described.) Constantly darting around the shop, she never seems to stop moving.

Entering the shop sets half a dozen bells jangling, and the visitor must duck under a low-hanging serpent-shaped kite. The shelves on the walls hold different colors of paper and cardboard, string, pegs, craft knives, design books, and other resources. Ready-for-assembly kits are stacked on the top shelves, and complete kites are hung along the ceiling. A pillar in the center of the room is covered with photographs of favorite kites – these are replaced every so often with new snapshots from regular



SHELL GAME

If demons should discover "Jenny's" secret, they might produce a *third* "Jenny," through disguise or Songs, and have her commit a few crimes. Providing one alibi is hard enough, but providing two . . .

visitors. Jenny's rooms are above the shop, and are off limits to everyone.

Jenny's enthusiasm is infectious, and she is one of the reasons that so many people frequent the shop. They ignore her occasional lapses of memory and odd changes of behavior, though a few of them have decided that she suffers from Attention Deficit Disorder.

The truth is stranger. "Jenny Hawthorne" is actually a part played by two separate angels. Priscilla, Ofanite of the Wind, and Prudence, Mercurian of the Wind, share the Role. They persuaded their Archangel (who was most amused) to grant them identical vessels in addition to the ones they already had, and while one minds the store, the other roams out of town. This allows them to avoid dissonance from staying in a place for more than three days. So far (five years now) they've managed to avoid being seen at different places at the same time and in the same vessel. When one of them returns, the other briefs her thoroughly on recent events before heading out herself, though there are always a few omissions . . . Their apartment upstairs has two bedrooms, one for each of them, decorated in different styles.

Priscilla, Ofanite of the Wind

Priscilla buzzes with enthusiasm, swooping around the shop like an eagle. As her memory isn't very good, she is constantly taking notes on events to pass the information to Prudence. If contradicted by a customer (who was previously dealing with Prudence) she often tries to bluster it out and claim that the customer is in error. She is the more aggressive of the two angels, forcing her latest enthusiasm on any nearby customers.

Prudence, Mercurian of the Wind

Prudence does her best to help Priscilla by copying her mannerisms, as the Ofanite has difficulty mimicking *hers*. She is quieter, and can spend hours with a client looking for "the right kite for them." Her periods of playing "Jenny Hawthorne" include more spells of "forgetfulness" than Priscilla's, and occasionally she's been fooled into honoring a false claim by liars. When this gets found out, she likes to pay a visit to such people during her "days off" . . .



Alvarez' Laundromat

Your neighborhood 24 hour laundromat

- **Reliable machines**
- **Friendly Service**
- **Located at 218 South 3rd, between Arango's Café and Second Time Clothes.**

Michel Alvarez, proprietor

LAUNDROMAT

*The EloHITE listened, as the woman next to her chattered on. "And I said, well, if you just **look** at the way she walks around, it's quite clear what sort of woman she is . . ."*

Young or old, human or celestial – everybody needs to get their clothes washed. The local Laundromat is sandwiched between a 24-hour cafe and a second-hand clothes shop, and there's always *someone* waiting for the spin cycle to finish.

Several of the neighborhood grandmothers consider the place their personal hangout, and come there to wash the bags of family clothing. They sit in the corners with cups of coffee from the cafe, happily discussing the local gossip and the moral deficiencies of the modern world.

One of them is more than she seems – she's Miyaki, an EloHITE of David, and regularly brings all the washing from her local fellow Servitors to give herself an excuse to be there. There's usually quite a lot of it, and it's *extremely* dirty. Nobody has yet commented on the number of things she washes with dried brown stains on them . . .

Listening to the other women talking allows Miyaki to keep up with the neighborhood gossip. It also lets her, from time to time, motivate them into useful community action. A carefully placed comment can prompt the creation of a neighborhood watch, for instance, or sending the children to a martial arts dojo.

Miyaki doesn't know that the second-hand clothes shop next door is used by a local drug dealer to hand over drugs and collect money. Since the dealer is usually active in the late afternoon, while Miyaki is there in the evening, their paths haven't yet crossed. The woman who runs the clothes shop, Susan Jennit, has no idea that her store is being used for these exchanges, but is venal enough to ignore the drug dealing if she receives a payoff.

The laundromat itself is a largish room with 15 washing machines and 15 dryers. The washing machines are down the left side of the room, and the dryers down the right. Clusters of chairs run down the center of the room, so customers can sit and wait for their laundry, and there are change machines and soap-vending machines to one side. While occasionally a machine is out of order, the owner, Michel Alvarez, repairs them rapidly. The place is never quiet, as machines are always churning away and vibrating as the washing is done . . .

Michel Alvarez, Laundromat Owner

Michel is a young man in his mid-20s, who has recently taken over the business from his uncle. He doesn't have any extravagant goals for his life, and is happy to manage a small Laundromat and make a comfortable living. Fortunately, he has enough self-respect and intelligence to keep the place running efficiently. The machines are in good repair, and the Laundromat itself is clean and fresh. He is usually in his office behind the Laundromat itself, struggling with the accounts. If there is any trouble, he's not a hero – he'll phone for the police.

Miyaki, EloHITE of Stone

Miyaki, in her Role as Liza Donnen, has a day job at the local martial arts studio, keeping the place clean and encouraging the students in their efforts. She didn't originally intend to use this place as a listening post, but she has found it extremely effective. Quiet and bland, she's one of the least obvious of the group of women, and can usually maneuver someone else into making remarks on her behalf. If she sees someone at the Laundromat who's clearly a celestial, she'll pay close attention. She'll just observe demons, not wanting to break her cover, but may talk to angels if she has information relevant to them.



LIBRA SURVEYS

A young man accosted the pair of women as they manhandled their shopping bags off the bus. "Excuse me! I wonder if you could spare me just a moment of your time. In keeping with our attempts to get a better picture of what the public wants, I've got a few questions I'd like to ask you." He uncapped his pen. "It won't take a moment..."

Libra Surveys is a small agency dedicated to providing market surveys on any topic that their clients may desire. They have a small permanent staff, and connections with several temp agencies that let them put a large number of agents into the field if necessary. They also have Julia, an EloHITE of Dominic, as Survey Organizer. She puts together the questions in the surveys they use and then privately correlates the results to check for celestial activity in an area. These results are then passed on to the local Tether of Judgment, and may result in teams being sent to investigate problem areas – probably with a briefing from Julia first.

Agents from Libra Surveys may show up anywhere, clipboard and pen in hand, with a list of questions that range from the sensible to the apparently meaningless. Julia carefully chooses the questions to establish statistical preferences for the companies commissioning the surveys. However, she takes the opportunity to slip in a few ques-

tions of her own designed to locate demonic, Outcast, or Ethereal activity. ("How much mythology have you or your family ever read? Would you say that you eat more than the average family? Name three local streets that you would be afraid to go through at night.") A trained statistician and data analyst, with the survey data she can spot sudden upsurges and changes in popular opinion, and identify the areas where they are occurring.

The business is housed in a battered office block on the edges of the town's main business area. Its money goes to fast and effective service rather than elegant fittings and location. While not very fashionable, it's neat and tidy enough, with several secretaries always at work organizing the data from the latest surveys. Visitors will be met by the receptionist (one of the secretaries) and brought through the general office area to see the manager, Magnus Droster.

Magnus is polite and helpful to guests, but has a smooth, crisp energy which many may find daunting. (Julia, in comparison, is warm and helpful.) He usually has at least a couple of surveys running at any given moment, but will take bookings for future surveys, and arrange interviews with Julia. He leaves the actual arranging of surveys to her, handling all the money and accounting himself.



Julia, Elohite of Judgment, Survey Organizer

Julia (under her Role as Julia Frenion) appears as a vigorous young woman with short blonde hair, neat suits, and brightly-colored silk blouses. She is deliberately bright and cheerful, in order to distract attention from her true celestial identity. Working at the business was her own idea, and she's proved for the last ten years that it produces definite results. Dominic has refrained from giving her triad assignments, due to her efficiency in her current position, though he watches her for signs of overly strong attachment to the people or the place.

Magnus Droster, Manager

Magnus is a man in his late 50s with iron-gray hair and steel-rimmed glasses, a back like a poker and a mind like a steel buzzsaw. Most people, if told that there was a Dominican in the agency, would fix on him at once as the obvious candidate. He is ignorant of the War and of Julia's nature, merely seeing her as the best survey-writer and analyst that he has ever employed. He's considering expanding the scope of the agency, and possibly bringing in another analyst to help her – Julia is discouraging this.

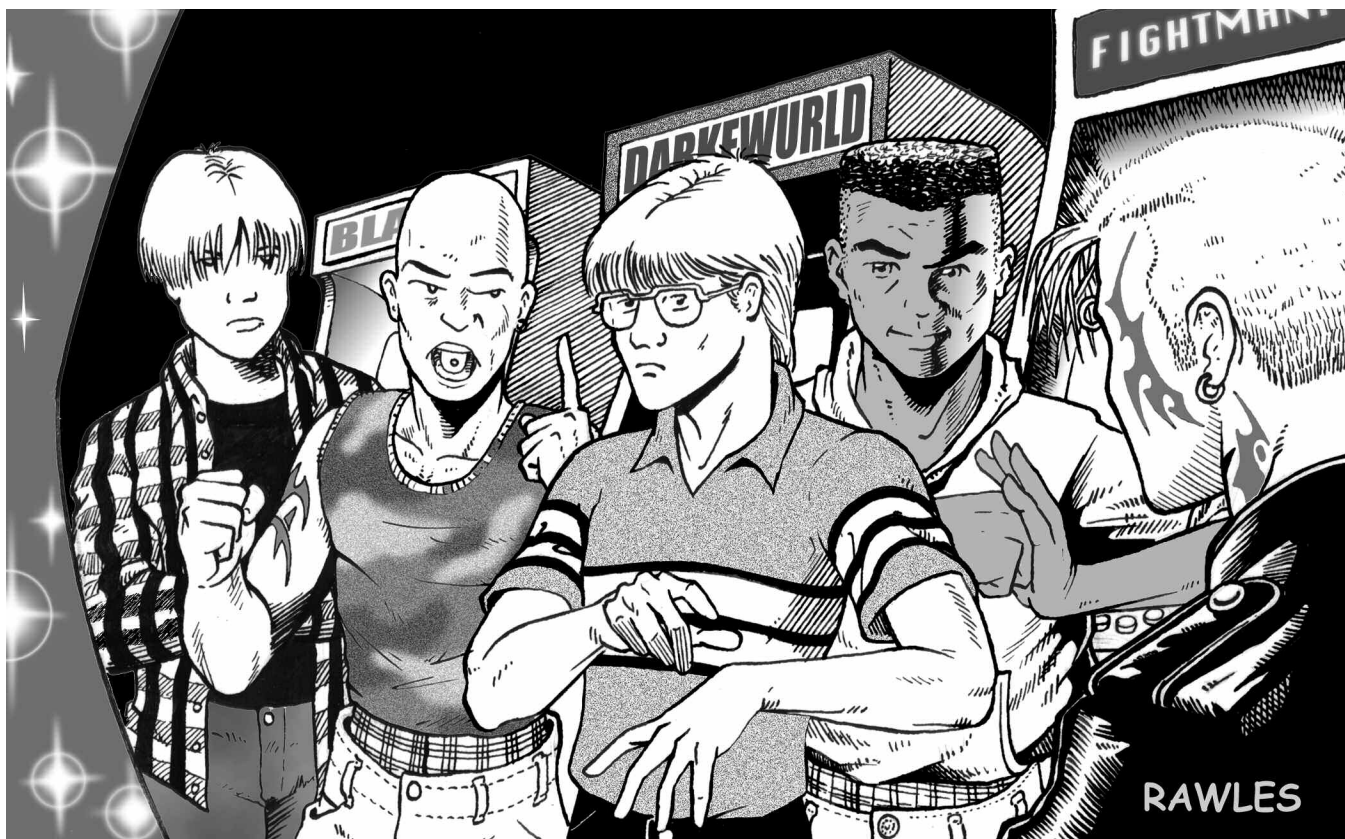
THE NEON PALACE

The arcade was busy. Several teenage girls chattered over their coffee, comparing nail polish, while a few feet away a young man wrenched at a joystick and yelled at the screen. Other groups, male and female, repeated the pattern of bystanders and players along the walls of the room. Down at the cafe end, there was – as usual – a line for service.

The Mercurian leaned on the machine he'd been adjusting and squinted thoughtfully down the room. It'll do, he thought. Now, as long as Viviane doesn't try bringing those cigarettes in again – I'd hate to have to throw her out for good . . .

The Neon Palace is a standard-looking mall arcade, full of video games and pinball machines. It's the hangout for a lot of the local teenagers, and is known to their parents as a place that doesn't have any *serious* trouble. A Mercurian of Creation in service to Blandine monitors the place, keeping the old machines running and working on his own private project in the back room.

The Neon Palace certainly isn't well-funded, since Samuel can't bring himself to overprice the refreshments or to demand a cover charge. While this makes the place very popular, it also leaves him out of pocket. He's forced to repair old machines past any reasonable breakdown point, and can only rarely afford to buy new ones.



It's a tribute to Samuel's work that the clientele is as large and regular as it is. While some of the teenagers prefer newer and fancier games, they all drift back to the Neon Palace eventually. Oddly, adults don't frequent the place much. This may be because it's seen as a "kids' area." The customers are almost exclusively between the ages of 15 and 19; as they get older, they drift to other amusements.

Samuel enforces a no-smoking rule, and refuses to allow overt drinking. (He's willing to turn a blind eye to an older teenager with an unobtrusive can of beer, but will throw out anybody waving bottles around publicly.)

People grumble, but generally follow his rules. This has resulted in general parental approval of the place – or at least, a lack of disapproval. Parents know that their kids are *safe* if they're at the Neon Palace.

Unfortunately, that situation is beginning to slip. Several aggressive 17-year-olds have recently moved into town with their parents during a company relocation. They're bringing a new level of violence to the local youth scene, which is reorganizing itself in reaction. The newcomers have formed a gang, and are attracting local teenagers; other locals, in response, are grouping to defend themselves. And the Neon Palace is where they keep on clashing.

The ringleader of the newcomers is Jack Dobson, who's already been thrown out of six schools. His father, who keeps on being relocated between companies, tells the new schools that his son had to move to stay with him. Jack smokes, drinks, smashes arcade game machines if he loses, and is generally objectionable. Removing him won't solve any problems, as the other newcomers are similar types and would just take over if he were gone. The local teenagers are beginning to realize that there's a whole world of violence out there that they never knew existed. And a dangerous number of them think it would be fun to be part of it.

Samuel is troubled by the situation, and is beginning to worry that it's out of control. He's tried reporting Jack to the police, but his father paid the fines. As the level of violence begins to rise, Samuel won't be able to resolve it on a purely human level. He doesn't see how he *can* bring any angelic powers to bear in this situation. His influence among the local teenagers is high, but that doesn't alter the fact that he isn't "one of them" – he's an adult.

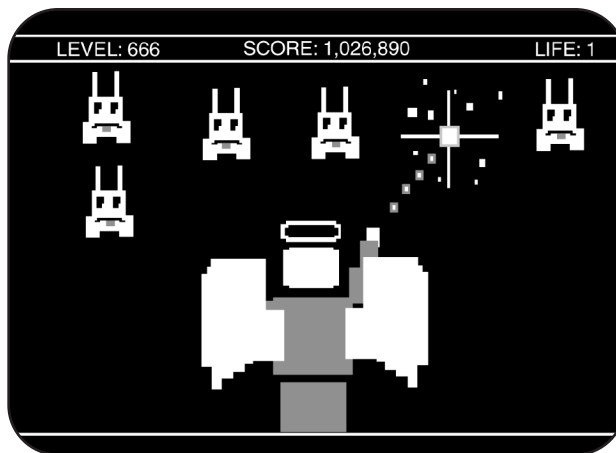
The Neon Palace itself is laid out in a standard style. Entry is through a pair of glass doors at the front of the outlet, and the machines are placed along either wall down the length of the room.

Unlike most mall arcades, though, there is a small cafe in the back, run by teenagers employed by Samuel. It sells coffee, sandwiches, and other snacks. In the middle of the room are tables and chairs, which can be moved around if customers wish. Samuel wanders through the arcade, checking on the condition of machines, sorting out problems, and generally keeping a finger on the pulse of the place.

The back rooms are Samuel's private area, with his bedroom and workroom. The workroom contains the disassembled guts of several machines in the process of being overhauled – and, in the far corner, Samuel's *special* project.

The metalwork and computer gadgetry look like any other chunks of machinery in the room. Samuel prefers it that way. He doesn't want anyone to know that he's creating an entirely new game until it's finished. He dreams of a glorious and heretical project – a game like many on the market, with one player against the computer, or two players against each other, and with the players using computer-generated characters. However, those characters would be *Archangels and Demon Princes*. Samuel realizes that this game would only be of relevance to other celestials, and he doesn't care. He feels it's too cool an idea not to share.

Samuel therefore spends his spare hours – those not consumed by the upkeep of the place and his work among the teenagers – in developing the game. He's trying to invent special combat moves, finishing strikes, background effects . . . However, he doesn't have more than half an hour to an hour to spare on any given day to work on it. He realizes that Servitors of Judgment would disapprove *strongly* of the whole idea. Fortunately, they don't come calling on him often. If he encountered a celestial who seemed to have similar tastes – even a neutral or friendly demon or Renegade – he might share the concept, and try and get some assistance. This would depend, however, on the other celestial being absolutely no threat to the arcade. Should he think that someone endangered his charges, he'd call down Judgment himself if necessary.



Samuel, Mercurian of Creation

Samuel, known as “Sam” to all the locals, is a friendly young man whose arms are usually smeared to the elbows with oil and grease. His usual dress is a t-shirt with some science fiction slogan or other, jeans, and trainers. He sees his current position as a way to encourage friendly behavior among the local teenagers. To him, the recent boost in arcade and video games with story-based themes is a *definite* move toward creative thinking. He likes to work in an unobtrusive position in the Neon Palace, just tinkering with the machines and occasionally throwing out troublemakers. The arrival of the new gang is something that he’s not sure how to deal with. He’s never had to cope with trouble on this level before, and he certainly can’t *hurt* them or fight back offensively. While local Servitors of Blandine occasionally contact him, he’s generally left to his own work by the Archangel of Dreams.

“... I am Donrathiel, Seraph of Judgment. We are here to – what am I *standing* in? – investigate a fugitive who may have passed through this location. This is his photograph. Please wipe your fingers before you get oil on it, if you must handle it. I would also like to know precisely why those youths outside called me ‘the Man’ and kicked several empty beer cans in my direction ...”

Jack Dobson, Gang Leader

Jack is sullen, bored, and troublesome at school – which is a pity, for he’s intelligent and has a taste for philosophy. Unfortunately, he’s combined personal readings in nihilism with being thrown out of half a dozen schools. He couldn’t care less now about society, his father, or anything except the thrill of the moment. He’s managed to indoctrinate his close friends with this philosophy – a few of them can even reliably quote Nietzsche. Violence is one of the few things that actually excites him, and he sees the Neon Palace as an excellent place to work.



A PET FOR ALL SEASONS

The storekeeper sorted through the box of dog toys. “Right. You’ve definitely got the best of the litter there – lovely Labrador puppy, absolutely lovely. Look at those bright eyes. Now, you’ll be wanting the regular vaccinations for him, proper dog food, leash, license tags, some books about what to do if he gets ill, a sign-up form for my dog-handling classes ...”

This shop, run by a police officer who resigned from the force six years ago, is a new feature in the area. The proprietor, Daniel Tevers, was a dog-handler and dog-trainer with the K-9 Corps, but left the force in order to work in the domestic market. While his shop contains pets of all kinds – cats, mice, snakes, fish, dogs – his speciality is dog obedience classes. These take place after shop hours Monday to Friday, and he insists that the dog owners attend with their pets. Owners tend to leave the classes with a far better comprehension of what their dogs are trying to tell them ...

Daniel’s secret is that he is a human in the service of Jordi – not a full Soldier of God, as he doesn’t have and never will have 6 Forces. However, he does serve God and Jordi (the two to him are somewhat indistinguishable) with a sincere heart and the utmost faith. His primary function is to train people who want pets how best to care for them. Since it is inevitable – for the moment, at least – that people will *keep* pet animals, they must be taught to understand those animals.

His other duty is to provide hosts for Kyriotates in town. While he mainly supplies Kyriotates of Jordi, he will also provide hosts for Kyriotates of other Archangels. One can’t always rely on what’s picked up off the street, after all ... He can even provide dogs which have been trained as police sniffer dogs, thanks to his



previous work. Daniel will, however, be furious if any animal supplied by him comes back *hurt* – or even healed after having been hurt. He has a genuine, burning compassion for the animals in his care. If they suffer because some fool of an angel was *careless*, then he will never let that angel use one of his animals as a host again. The local Servitors of Jordi will support him in this, being of the same opinion themselves . . .

Daniel's shop is known to all the local children (who love looking in the window) and to most of the local adults. He is known for taking good care of the pets he sells. The shop window is wide (though tinted to prevent glare) and shows most of the main room of the shop, where a lot of the pets are kept. There is a large yard out behind, where he holds the dog obedience classes. On the upper floor are his bedroom and office, a room for sick animals (next to his bedroom, naturally), and spare rooms for Servitors of Jordi passing through town.

Daniel Tevers

Daniel spent most of his life working as a police dog handler – until the day one of the dogs *spoke* to him. Marked for life by this experience, he left his job to follow the call of Jordi, seeing Jordi as the gestalt representative spirit of both humans and animals. (Angels have *tried* correcting him on this point, but it doesn't seem to work.) Before he'll sell any pets to shoppers, he does his best to make sure that they'll treat the animals well.

Daniel is in his early 50s, balding, with a pot belly and well-muscled arms. He has a hot temper, and doesn't shy from a fight, but he would never hurt children or women. He rarely gets into fights, however, as he's been told that his current job is more important to Jordi.

UPHILL MARKET CLOTHES SHOP

The two teenagers giggled as they sorted through the pile of clothing. "Oh, look! I don't believe they ever wore this stuff. . . Hey, do you have one of those tops in green?"

Uphill Market Clothes Shop is a nice little place that sells second-hand clothing. The shopkeeper, Martha Stesson, is prepared to take old clothes in trade as long as they're of reasonable quality. The shop is literally bulging at the seams with clothing. Racks are packed with fabrics, and trying to extract just one piece of clothing means having to take out about half a dozen others. There are shelves along the walls above the clothing racks which hold hats and shoes, fans and gloves and veils. A couple of small, curtained-off changing rooms at the back of the shop allow customers to change in privacy – although without much elbow-room.

The shop is mostly frequented by young people of both sexes, though older people come there to look for fancy-dress clothing, or costumes for amateur dramatics. It's astonishing how the long-dead fashions of 30 or 40 years ago can suddenly be the very latest style.

Martha Stesson has a certain advantage in advising them – she's an angel, Marusha, Mercurian of Destiny. Here in this low-profile shop, she can gently guide the destinies of those around her. With a quiet word or a vague suggestion, she can help them find their way to their true partner, or job, or vocation. (If all else fails, she'll convince them they look ideal in denim bell-bottoms before sending them off to meet the girl who would ruin their life.) While she doesn't take a large part in community activities, the shop is open from "eight till late" and she's always willing to share a cup of tea and talk.

What Marusha isn't mentioning – not to her Superior, not to *anybody* – are these occasional *urges* that she gets. She suspects that they're due to the Angry Discord that she's carrying. Humans can be so stupid, time and time again repeating the same errors, never *listening*. Why, there are times that she'd like to pick up her dressmaking scissors and just . . .

Not that she's ever done such a thing, of course. Her shop is a local oasis of tranquility and friendliness. She often puts up visiting angels who need somewhere to stay in her rooms above the shop, and informs them about local events.

It's a pity that one of the local girls seems to be slipping along the path to Hell, making the same mistakes over and over again. This girl, Louise Vinnet, is always sorry for what she's done afterward – but then she forgets her repentance and does it again. It's enough to make Marusha lose her temper . . .



Marusha, Mercurian of Destiny, Second-Hand Clothes Seller

Marusha hasn't been out of Heaven long – and, frankly, the blessed souls there were so much *easier* to cope with than the humans on Earth. While she has a wonderful time enjoying their creativity and lifestyle, they can be so *stupid*. At one point shortly after starting her job here, some teenagers tried to hold up her shop, and she *hit* a couple of them – admittedly in self-defense, but still violence.

Horried by the dissonance, she forced it into the Angry Discord, and now tries to ignore its existence. She does her job painstakingly, with a genuine concern for her customers, appearing as a middle-aged woman going gray at the temples. She refuses to admit to her murderous impulses, even to herself, and certainly would never ask for help in dealing with them. If she did kill someone, she wouldn't accept that it had even happened – she'd try to conceal the evidence, and just go on as normal . . .

WAVE POINT COVE

In the bay, the humans swam alongside a pod of dolphins. Less obviously, an older man was treading water further out, murmuring to the dolphin that undulated beside him. "All right, we'll look into the fisheries business. I'll report here next week."

At the top of the cliff, a woman stood looking down and smiling. This beach would be the setting for her latest masterwork. The dolphins might even enjoy it too . . .

For a long time, Wave Point Cove has been a contact point for human and marine Servitors of Jordi. It's a small beach, which is totally covered by the sea at high tide, with two narrow paths leading down the granite cliffs that surround it. Unspoiled so far by pollution, the cove is the sort of thing that amateur painters yearn to paint.

Khan, a Seraph of Jordi, regularly comes to the shore in the form of a dolphin, accompanied by his pod. The beach is established as a spot where one can actually *swim* with dolphins (after the appropriate safety waivers have been signed). Khan therefore has no difficulty in getting close to human Soldiers of Jordi, or other celestials in human form, and passing on any messages unnoticed. The man who organizes the swimming sessions for



humans isn't connected to the War – he's just sympathetic to animal rights and encouraging natural awareness.

Jennifer, a Seraph of Creation, has recently noticed the beach and thinks that it would be *perfect* for her latest project. With a couple of human Soldiers, she's planning to assemble a giant pipe organ that will be partly above water and partly below it. The sounds produced should to some degree resemble whalesong – and, she hopes, to some degree resemble celestial speech. It's never been tried before, but she's the Seraph who hopes to see it done. With the assistance of two very loyal Soldiers, she's busy getting permission from the government and setting the building in progress. The government officials who she's spoken to see it as a major new arts program, which could produce a lot of favorable publicity for them – *they* aren't going to refuse her.

Jennifer is unaware that the beach is a rendezvous for Servitors of Jordi. She believes firmly that the dolphins will enjoy whatever sounds she manages to produce – or if not, relocate a few beaches away. Khan is unaware that Jennifer is a Servitor of Creation, and has only just noticed surveyors beginning to walk around the beach with thoughtful expressions. He will take whatever actions are necessary to stop technology and civilization encroaching on *his* territory.

Khan, Seraph of Animals

Khan is a Seraph of Animals who's proud to have found a way to influence and communicate with humans without having to take on a human form. While not xenophobic, he considers the bipedal mode awkward, unattractive, and deformed – though he's polite enough not to tell the poor humans so. He watches the seas in the area, communicating with other Servitors of Jordi and marine life further out, then passes the information in to land. He will be absolutely outraged at any attempt to build on his beach, and will take it as a personal insult.

Jennifer, Seraph of Creation

Jennifer is a Seraph of Creation with a mind so open to new ideas that one could build a public highway through it. Her current enthusiasm (they come and go) is this concept of a pipe organ sited, as she puts it, “mid earth and sky, 'mid heaven and sea.” While she might not have started trying to build it here if she'd *known* about the Servitors of Jordi, she isn't going to stop now that she's got the site arranged. Her opinion will be that the dolphins could perfectly well gather further down the coast, but that *this* is the perfect spot for her mighty organ.



To: jonesi@compsci.edu
From: brecok@compsci.edu
Subject: Re: Access Times

I repeat, it is quite impossible to allocate any more time for your class. We have already had two server crashes. You must cut down on your requests. There is no other option. If your students want to gorge, let them do it at the cafeteria, not in my lab. - C.

To: brecok@compsci.edu
From: jonesi@compsci.edu
Subject: Re: Access Times

My dear madam, you're behind the times. If the students Need time, we must give them time. I'd have thought that a Servitor of Technology -- and a Lilim, at that -- would understand that. And what was that angel of Judgment doing poking around yesterday? You can spot them a mile off. If you are trying to play some kind of game, take care that you don't become "it." - I.

To: jonesi@compsci.edu
From: brecok@compsci.edu
Subject: Re: Access Times and Judgment Servitors

Yes, I know it was an angel of Judgment. A Seraph. He was looking for some Outcast of Destiny. I avoided him. Now, on more important matters, there is *insufficient access time*. Matters are not helped by your forgetting to turn up to meetings. And don't tell me you didn't get the notice this time -- I sent Penny to notify you in person. Perhaps you should leave the running of this department to those who can handle it, hmm? - C.

ALIGNED WITH HELL

COMPUTER SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

The Impudite moved among the class of students as they sat at their computers, feeling his attunement work on them. Yes, he exulted, yes, yes, yes, you want more access time, you want better equipment, you want more . . .

In the local university, there is a thriving Department of Computer Science. Students from across the country rub shoulders there, studying the principles of computer languages, the coding of programs, artificial intelligences, Turing tests . . . Naturally, shaping such growing minds is an area of great interest to celestial forces. The young humans' talents can be turned to good or evil. (Or even, as the Servitors of Vapula would proudly state, to the advancement of pure science.)

The Department occupies the ground floor and basement of the Engineering Building on campus, and is linked to the campus computer network. It also houses the Technical Support group, which is not *formally* part of the Department, but shares the floorspace.

In the basement are stored the expensive and *large* computer servers, behind locked doors, in climate-controlled rooms. These servers are the backbone of the campus network, host the University's Web pages, store all the stu-

dent records, and crunch a great many numbers. They have become vital to the functioning of the University, which is why they're so well guarded. Only security staff or the senior members of the Department have keys to the server rooms, and the entire basement has a swipe card lock on the door.

On the ground floor are a collection of lecture rooms, computer labs, and offices. The lecture rooms are capable of seating 30 students comfortably, or 50 if they are friendly. The computer labs are more restricted, as they each contain only 25 to 30 computers. It is forbidden to bring food or drink into the labs. The offices are used by members of staff and teaching assistants, and are kept locked when their occupants are not present. There are also a couple of common rooms, where the students can sit around and discuss their work - or other things. Naturally, there are also a number of drink machines, both hot and cold. Even if their products are hardly pleasant to drink, they do at least provide sugar and caffeine.

The students are a mixed group, ranging from the intelligent and interested to those with no aptitude for computers who simply took a course in order to complete their classes. Naturally, it's the intelligent and dedicated students who spend long hours at the terminals, working on their studies or on private projects. (A couple of the students have formed a private syndicate to do other students' classwork for them, in return for a small amount of money. This service hasn't been discovered by any members of staff yet.)

The building is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, although from 8 p.m. till 6 a.m. there is a security guard at the door who demands a student or faculty ID. There are always some students in the computer labs late at night, indulging in online chat sessions or playing games – or even working – and illicitly bringing food into the labs.

Attempted hacking into sites elsewhere is a frequent illegal pastime after midnight, although nobody has managed to get into anything really secret yet. The one interesting-looking database which a student named Stephen Hall managed to access recently only contained a set of Biblical names. (It should be noted that some kind of online security came up, and that Stephen's computer dumped its memory, shut down the network, and e-mailed the sysop. Nobody has yet explained this, least of all Stephen.)

The Head of Department, Dr. Kate Breconsfield, is a constant source of encouragement to her students, in a cold and brisk way. Her manner is closer to that of the threatening wolf than that of the nurturing sheepdog – but even so, her passion for her work and concern for the education of her students is motivating. She's always willing to assist students in their needs for more computer time or facilities, if they'll work on some extra project of hers, or agree to do so in the future. This has recently become harder for her, however, as Professor Idris Jones (a newcomer to the Department) is encouraging the students attending his classes into more and more work. There simply isn't *enough* access time or equipment to go around . . .

What the students don't know is that both Dr. Breconsfield and Professor Jones are demons – Careah, Lilim of Technology, and Idbash, Impudite of Gluttony. Careah is well-entrenched in her position, but is rapidly growing to loathe the newcomer Idbash, who is threatening her position by causing the students to desire more than she can give. Idbash, in turn, is enjoying utilizing his Consume attunement on the students to make them use up more and more of the Department's resources. He was *prepared* to work with Careah when he met her, but is now finding her openly hostile to him – so much so that he's considering removing her.

What *neither* of them realize is that they're being played against each other by Peninnah, an EloHITE of Flowers. Peninnah is currently under the Role of Penny Adthorpe, a sophomore with a computer lab job. She has identified both the demons, and correctly believes that if they knew about her, they'd work together to dispose of her. She also correctly estimates that she can't handle them alone. Peninnah is therefore working on a subtle campaign of misplaced memos and letters, rumors, and the occasional server crash. By forcing the

growing tension to a head, she hopes that one of them will chase the other out of the area. She can then deal with the remaining demon – one way or another – more effectively. She's having to take care not to cause too much incidental stress to the students, but so far it seems to be working . . .

Careah, Lilim of Technology, Department Head

Careah is one of Vapula's older Lilim, and has spent a while working her Role into its current position. She's genuinely fond of science, and is an effective researcher. After a nasty period in Trauma following an encounter with Servitors of Lightning 50 years ago, she's taken care to keep her Role above suspicion. As things are, she encourages research and scientific education, and provides student programmers and hackers to do piece-work on other Vapulan projects. Careah appears as a bony woman in her late 40s, with short brown hair graying at the temples and horn-rimmed glasses. She has a Canadian accent.

Idbash, Impudite of Gluttony, Professor

Idbash is a naturally good-humored and quite young Impudite of Gluttony. He sees the obsessive desire for computer usage as a new and fascinating field. He'd hoped to get the help of any local Servitors of Vapula with this idea, and is rather hurt by Careah's hostility. This hasn't stopped him continuing to try and undermine her power base. Idbash appears as a black-haired man in his 30s with a definite Welsh accent. He belongs to the local branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism, where he claims to be an expert on Welsh culture. (He isn't.)

Peninnah, EloHITE of Flowers, Sophomore Student

Peninnah has always enjoyed computer programming, and doesn't see why being a Servitor of Flowers should make her, as she puts it, "a holdover hippie who's scared of microchips." At the moment, she's keeping a low profile until she's managed to remove at least one of the demons from the department. She won't reveal herself to anybody except an angel whom she believes will help her stay secret, and is taking *great* care to avoid Careah and her Need-reading. Peninnah appears to be in her early 20s, and has short spiked blonde hair and a trim figure. She's a regular visitor to the local tennis courts.

DELLMAN'S STUDIOS

The director waved a languid hand at the crowd of extras. "All right, all right, it's a wrap, OK! You can take the thongs off now – no, Susie, not in front of me, honey – and go get dressed like normal people."

Twenty yards directly below him, in a well-lit cellar, a thick-set man moved along a line of sleeping bodies. He paused to adjust the headset and goggles on one, then to check the IV line feeding into her arm. "All right," he called over his shoulder. "Start running the redemption routine."



Dellman's Studios is generally known as a producer of B-movies. It specializes in cheap science fiction and horror films, providing a haven for good-looking but untalented actors and actresses. The studio may not be producing the next *Independence Day*, but the young actors who work there see it as a chance to break into the movie business – and at least it pays the rent. It's been in business for 20 years now, and still makes a profit.

What the humans never know is that the entire studio is a front for a demonic operation. Drugged would-be Renegades are brought to the studio by night, and taken down to the cellars. They are put through a program of drugs and subliminal conditioning, then taken to the nearest Tether of Beleth, and shipped across the Marches to the Camp (see p. 115.)

The studio itself is run by an Impudite of Nightmares, one Delleran, who provides a public front for the operation. His Role, James Dellman, is well known in the business as friendly and easy to get along with – many people have been astonished by the film deals that he's negotiated. The primary director is blond and charming Armand Fortesque, a Balseraph of Nightmares with a natural tal-

ent for directing second-rate science fiction films. (His detractors whisper that he certainly hasn't any talent for first-rate ones.)

The upper – and publicly accessible – part of the studio is laid out in a long U-shaped building, with an area of rough ground and woodland behind it. The entire location is enclosed by a well-maintained electrical fence, and patrolled by night. The rough ground is used for filming outdoor scenes, and has featured as the terrain of alien planets in many movies. The two long arms of the building contain a number of soundstages, and are used for indoor filming. The front of the building holds the administrative staff's offices.

Below the offices lie a set of cellars, where heavy props are stored. A passage from the cellars leads into the deepest part of the building, where sleeping demons are subliminally conditioned. There is a heavy steel door with a keypad lock, and a Force Catcher (*Liber Reliquarium*, p. 61) built into the lock to trap any Kyriotates of Jean. Only demons permanently working at the studio know the combination.

Behind the door is a well-lit room with 30 beds, each with its own set of equipment, and a bank of computer monitors at the far end. There are usually at least a dozen bodies on the beds – demons being processed to go to the Camp, or after having returned from it. Each demon's vessel has an IV in his arm, and a set of earphones and goggles over his head. He is subjected to a continuous level of sedatives that keep him semi-conscious, and has visual and auditory subliminals fed to him.

The aim of the conditioning for demons going to the Camp is to make them believe that they have redeemed, and are now angels. The tone of the subliminals is extremely bland, suggesting pretty happy redemptions with bright colors and soft music – some of the visual subliminals were borrowed directly from Disney's *Fantasia*. Usually the Archangel supposed to be redeeming the demon is Eli or Novalis. Demons that have returned from the Camp are conditioned to believe that they have managed to escape to Earth, and reached an Infernal Tether. The tapes used for the conditioning are inserted in the master control at the end of the room, and are kept in a locked cupboard when not in use. A Djinn of Technology supervises the entire procedure, and guards the tapes and machinery. He has a Habbalite assistant who is responsible for the drugs being used on the demons, and who makes sure that they stay in a suitable half-conscious state.

No humans are involved in this stage of the process, though a number of Soldiers of Hell are used to guard the studio. These Soldiers only know that they are guarding an area important to their infernal masters. Further curiosity is not encouraged.

Demons to be processed are brought to the studio unconscious, and at night. This is either covered up as a delivery of building material, or entirely concealed. Once processed, they are removed in the same way, to be taken to local Infernal Tethers.

Delleran's secretary, Annis Grahams, is aware that something very wrong is going on. She isn't a Soldier of Hell, but a normal, law-abiding woman. She is afraid that the studio is being used for drug deals, or for making snuff films – she saw the bodies of two demons being carried in one night, and never taken out again. However, she is too frightened to tell anybody about this, much less the police, and she is entirely charmed by Delleran. She has managed to convince herself that if she stays quiet about things then they will all sort themselves out. Delleran himself is not aware that she knows as much as she does. If he were, he would either persuade her to sign herself over to Hell, or reluctantly have her removed. (He would regret losing her – she's very good at taking his dictation.)

Some local angels have noticed the studio, and suspect it of being a center of infernal activity, but imagine that it is to do with the Media. Armand's behavior goes a long way toward supporting this. Delleran takes care that no local demons do anything too near to the studio, as he doesn't want Heavenly forces deciding that it needs investigation.

If the studio were ever seriously suspected and Delleran realized it, the operation would be halted immediately. Demons being processed would be moved to the nearest Tether, and all the technological equipment in the cellar would be shifted elsewhere. The whole processing operation would be reestablished safely elsewhere. Studio activity would continue normally above ground, so as not to attract attention.

Delleran, Impudite of Nightmares, Studio Administrator

Delleran has a distinctive scar across his Vessel's face – a Discord from a time in the past when he managed to foul up an operation and displease Beleth. He passes it off as the result of a special effects accident from his youth, claiming that he used to be an actor himself. (People who find no record of him ever having been in any films usually conclude that this is just a play for sympathy.) He is very personable, and is an extremely efficient business manager for the studio. His strongest concern is *always* the operation in the cellar, however, and he's turned down a number of profitable film deals that might have had angelic involvement. He appears as a man in his late 50s, going gray gracefully.



GARDEN DINOSAURS MANUFACTURERS

The conveyor belt ran steadily on, and pastel plastic dinosaurs toppled with heavy thuds into the prepared boxes.

The Balseraph watched, and murmured to the Calabite, "Now imagine the hallucinatory gas. Imagine the War of the Worlds radio broadcasts. Imagine the sheer havoc."

The Calabite sniffed. "Give me some nice straightforward poison. Dinosaurs and death. It'd be an idyllic existence."

A short distance out of town is a small factory. It produces something of a regional speciality – pastel plastic garden dinosaurs. Smooth and guaranteed not to have any sharp edges that might harm a child or pet, prettily pastel in shades bound to accessorize with a dream garden, they unfortunately sell extremely well. Local gardens abound with them, sprouting pink plastic in a pseudo-stylish manner.

The previous owner of the factory, a Ms. Christine Sommers, died last year of a heart attack. Her nephew, Jack Sommers, took over the factory, and is working on a new breakthrough in the world of pastel plastic garden dinosaurs. The guard patrols around the factory have been stepped up, and a new security chief has been hired, one Bernard Tims. However, the factory workers are still very motivated and enthusiastic – Jack has explained that he intends to definitely keep them all on, and even to expand.

Vanloads of new chemicals have been delivered at the factory recently, for the scientific research being conducted by Dr. Agatha Harker (brought in by Jack). None of the workers are *precisely* sure what she's researching, but the general opinion is that she's trying to find a reliable and tasteful way to make the dinosaurs glow in the dark. That, or to work as air-fresheners. Curiosity is rampant.

What the workers don't realize is that the three new arrivals at the factory are all demons. Jaanai, Balseraph of Nybbas, is posing as Jack Sommers. (The real Jack Sommers is in Amsterdam, working as a movie extra, quite unaware of his aunt's death.) Balak, Djinn of Belial, has the Role of Bernard Tims and is struggling with tendencies to obsess over the workers. Admatha, Calabite of Death, is suppressing her destructive tendencies to use the Role of Agatha Harker. (She always *wanted* to work for Technology . . .)

Jaanai brought the other two demons together to propose the plan of getting control of the factory and using it for some dark scheme or other. Admatha eliminated Christine Sommers with a Song of Ethereal Entropy – it was thought to be a simple heart attack. Balak controls the security of the factory, making sure that no snooping busybodies manage to get onto the factory grounds or into sensitive areas. Jaanai manages the business side of matters, and keeps the work force enthusiastic. Between the three of them, they do an extremely good job.

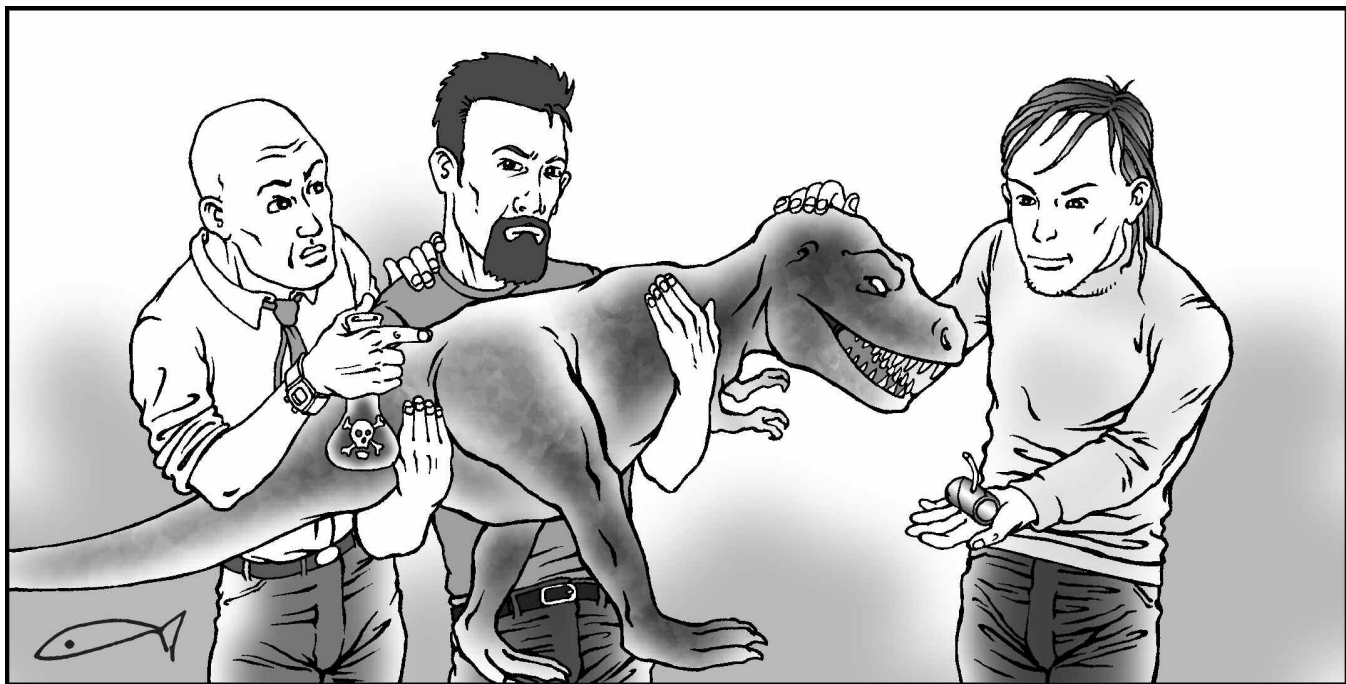
The only problem is that they can't now work out exactly *what* they want to do. Balak has suggested working incendiaries or explosives into the dinosaurs, in order to cause as large a holocaust as possible. Admatha prefers more subtle approaches, and is putting forward the idea of drenching the dinosaurs in contact poison, or making them out of materials that will destroy the surrounding gardens. Jaanai himself likes the concept of trying to bring the dinosaurs to *life*, somehow. Or perhaps to start a general media scare that aliens have landed, combining it with hallucinatory gas emitters and radio broadcasters in the

dinosaurs. The three demons are still discussing the best option. They can't really manage all three different ideas, as once the dinosaurs are identified as being behind one disaster, it won't be feasible to use them for future plots.

One thing that the demons do intend to utilize, whichever plan they end up with, is the factory's habit of distributing free samples to nearby homes. The demons intend to use this area as a testing ground, so that they can easily observe the first results. Of course, these homes *already* have numerous pastel dinosaurs dotted around their gardens from previous distributions. Anybody attempting to remove the new samples will have problems working out which is which.

The factory itself has a standard layout. The grounds are surrounded by walls and a wire fence, and are regularly patrolled by the security staff, who carry walkie-talkies. Staff arrive through the main gate, and show their ID card to enter. The main factory areas are: the chemical vats where the basic ingredients are mixed together; the molds where the mixture is poured into dinosaur-shaped forms; the sorting area where the molds are opened and the dinosaurs removed; and the packing area where the dinosaurs are packed for shipment. There are also secretarial areas for processing orders, rest rooms and dining rooms for the staff, offices for the senior executives and salesmen, and Dr Harker's laboratory.

Manufacturing workers have three eight-hour shifts a day, as do the security crew, and production goes on around the clock. Office staff operate on a normal 9-to-5 schedule. The total number of employees at the plant tops out at over 250.



Jaanai, Balseraph of Nybbas, Factory Owner

Jaanai is an experienced Balseraph, and very good at providing plausible cover stories. He realizes that his cover is blown if the *genuine* Jack Sommers returns, and has asked his Media friends in Amsterdam to keep the human busy there. Cautious and sensible, he doesn't want to waste the opportunity that this factory offers, and is restraining his more impetuous friends for the moment. He appears as a handsome young man with blond hair and a leisure suit, and speaks with a Californian accent, constantly telling amusing stories.

Balak, Djinn of Belial, Security Chief

Balak is sluggish, peevish, and sour. He would be happy to be at the center of a major conflagration, as long as nobody asked him to *care* about it. His security teams interpret his behavior as an excuse to skimp on their duties, which he hasn't realized yet – nor has Jaanai. If he should catch them at it, he would crack down ruthlessly. Balak always has one eye open for an escape, if necessary, and has inspected the factory floor for lines of cover in case a major gunfight should develop. So many things there could blow up entertainingly.

He appears to be a balding man in his late 40s with a permanent slouch and drawl.

Admatha, Calabite of Death, Scientist

Admatha is a victim of circumstances, she feels. If there had been any *justice* in the world, she'd have been able to work for Technology. As it is, she has to apply her undoubted intelligence to scientific advancements of Death – which, to be honest, makes her extremely happy. Half of the time, when her experiments work, her laboratory is a sinister and deathly place. The other half of the time, when they fail, it's a *wrecked* and sinister place. She appears as a young woman with short scruffy dark hair and lab coat, and loves discussing recent news with fellow scientists.



INFECTIOUS DISEASES UNIT

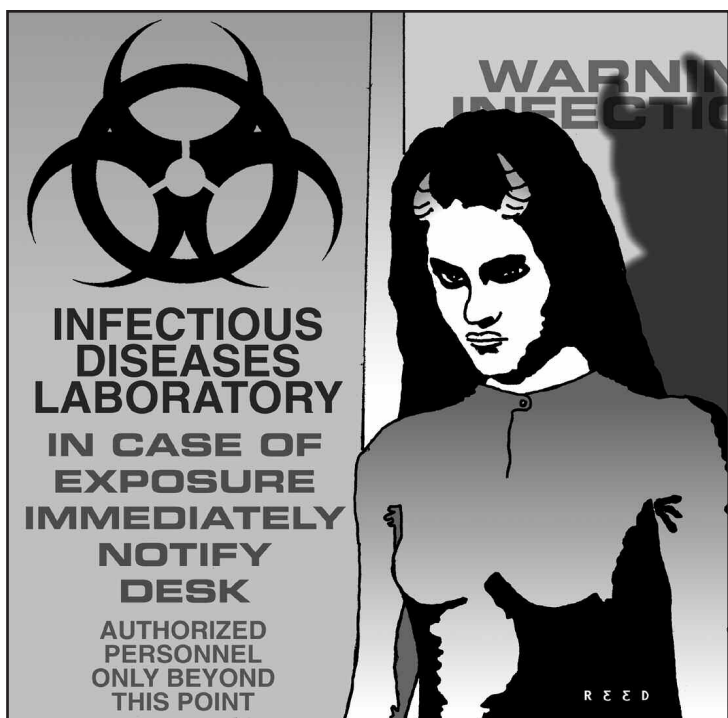
"Hush," the young woman in the medical gown hissed as she took the blood sample, and the patient shivered. "You can trust me. I'm a doctor, remember?"

This department is part of the local hospital, and while it is not usually overrun by patients, it is consistently busy. Along with patients suffering from actively infectious diseases, it also handles patients suffering from immune deficiency syndromes. While this obviously includes AIDS, it also covers other similar maladies which can be hereditary and are not necessarily passed through bodily fluid transfer. Even a cold can inflict damage out of all proportion for such patients, as their bodies can no longer efficiently counter it.

The department itself occupies the west wing of the first story of the hospital. There is a publicly marked entrance with a pair of double doors, which display a large sign stating *Infectious Diseases Unit* – it's extremely hard to claim not to have noticed it. Although there is a fire exit for emergencies, it's through these doors that all traffic goes to and from the hospital. Beyond the door is a short corridor, resembling an airlock passage, and then another pair of double doors giving onto the main area of the department. Just past the second pair of doors is a reception desk, and the clerk there will stop and question anybody not wearing hospital clothing or identification badges.

The unit itself is organized around a large central room, which is the main area where administration takes place, with small cubicles along the walls. Patients are cared for in the separate sealed cubicles, each of which is kept isolated from the rest. At the far end of the room are a couple of small laboratories, used for pathology testing and research.

Some patients are regular visitors here, to be given immunotherapy injections and to be checked for infections. Others are brought in as emergencies – meningitis cases, tuberculosis sufferers, victims of Vapulan plague experiments – and will be put in isolation and treated as well as the doctors can manage. Patients who are currently *infectious* will be kept in a sealed cubicle, and people wishing to see them must wear hospital masks, gowns, and gloves, which are discarded afterward.

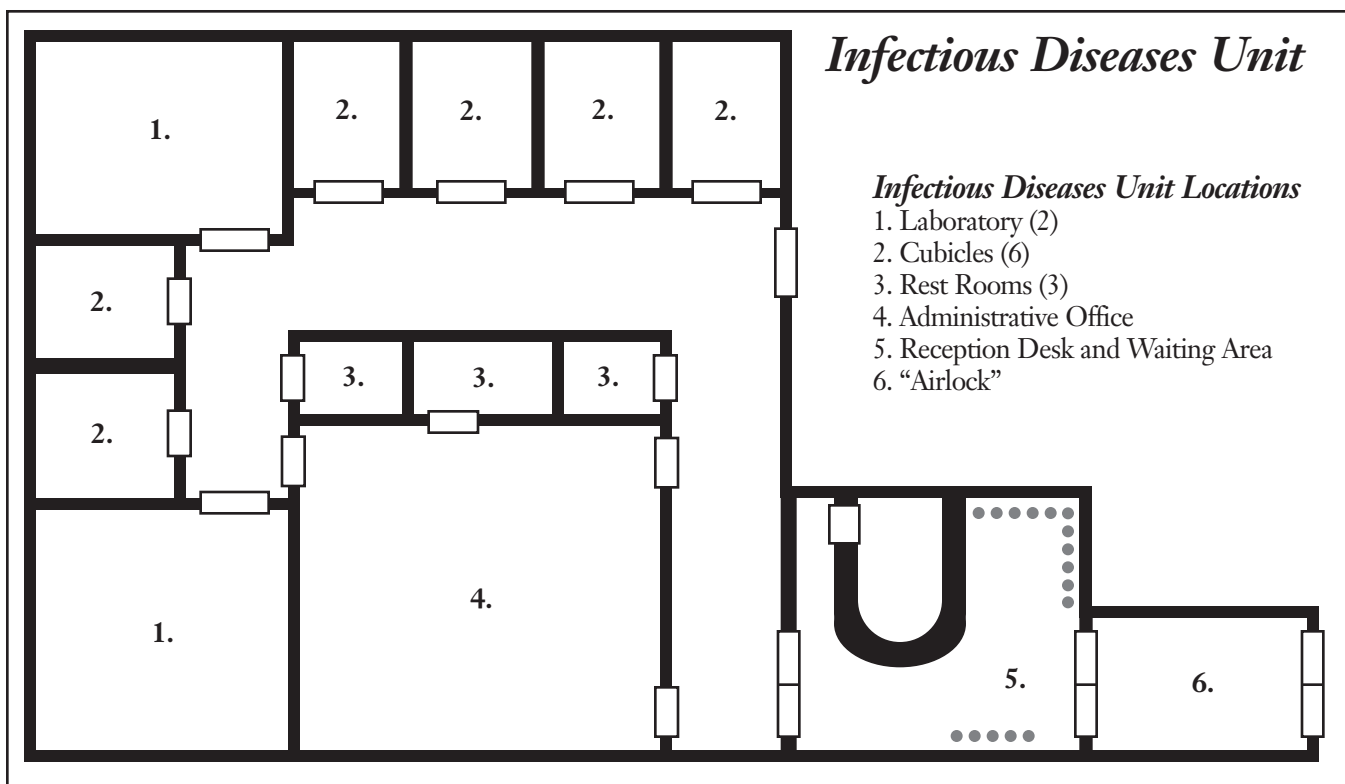


While there is celestial interest here, it isn't Heavenly. Andrealphus is aware that sexually transmitted diseases hamper the spread of Lust, and that the view of AIDS as "God's punishment" by some fundamentalists is . . . inconvenient. He is therefore taking a charitable interest

in AIDS research. While he *could* ask Vapula for assistance, there is a strong probability that Vapula would be far more interested in *improving* the disease. One of Andrealphus' Servitors, a Djinn of Lust named Ninette, works in this department as an intern, gathering general information on the disease. Should some sort of cure be developed by Servitors of Lust, a place like this would be an extremely good testing ground . . .

Ninette, Djinn of Lust, Intern

Ninette is comparatively young – less than 50 years old – and hasn't yet acquired the level of bitterness that most Djinn rise to. She views the long hours and hard work to which she's subjected as mere proof that nothing in the universe is worth caring about. Except, perhaps, being punished by her Prince for dereliction of duty. While she's somewhat rough with the patients, she has the Balseraph Band Attunement, which ensures none of them complain. She usually works the evening shifts, as the time of day doesn't bother her, and she's seduced a couple of the other medical staff after midnight in the laboratory. Dark-haired and petite, she looks like any other young doctor, though her manner is more cynical. If she hears rumors of angels in her department, or elsewhere in the hospital, she'll investigate – after all, she doesn't want to stay stuck in this job forever.



MOSS DENTISTRY

*The child shifted on the tilting leather chair, and a tear trickled out of the corner of his eye as he looked up at the dentist looming over him. Her metal **gadgets** flashed in her hands.*

*She smiled down at him. "Well, Peter, while I see to that filling, I'm going to tell you about how you should floss and brush. **Good** boys floss and brush, so that they'll have **good** teeth."*

*Peter froze. He knew that he'd been a **bad** boy . . .*

Moss Dentistry, run by Dr. Alison Moss, is known to all the neighborhood for cheap and effective service. While the proprietor is rather curt about lax toothbrushers, she's very efficient at removing decaying teeth and putting in fillings. She doesn't do much cosmetic dentistry, but manages to make a reasonable living. Her afternoon classes in schools on "Why We Should Brush Our Teeth So They Don't All Fall Out" are greatly appreciated by teachers.

Alison Moss is the sort of dentist that all families dream of finding. She works a ten-hour day, six days a week, and hardly ever takes a holiday. The receptionists seem to change quite fast – but then, it can't be easy working with someone so *dedicated* to her job. Alison is quite happy to fit emergency work into her day, and will explain good dental hygiene to the victim while she's busy working on their teeth.

Alison's secret is that she's actually Aisha, a Habbalite of the Game, put here under deep cover, with instructions not to draw any attention to herself. This includes not taking part in any active operations in the neighborhood. The exception to this, and her particular duty, is that of interrogations. She is skilled at combining drugs, pain, and mood swings to make any Renegade confess – and could perhaps even persuade an angel to reveal information.

Aisha threw herself into her task with enthusiasm, and has been building up her reputation for five years now. She actually finds her Role to be one that she can, as a Habbalite, take some pride in. She is able to "strengthen" people by recommending better dental hygiene, and to cut the decay from their mouths – as she only wishes she could cut treason from the hearts of Renegades. While she doesn't do anything as gauche as operate on patients without anaesthetic, her lectures on dental disci-

pline are accompanied by careful use of her resonance. She instills terror at the thought of teeth rotting in the mouth, and shame at the thought of being exposed as lazy and filthy. Her classroom lectures always end with the children frantically scrubbing at their teeth with the free toothbrushes that she provides. In fact, she's actually managing to lower the average number of fillings and extractions in children and teenagers in the area. Sometimes terror works.

The office is on a main road, which gets a fair amount of traffic passing through at night. (This provides useful cover when other Servitors of the Game need to bring people by to be interrogated.) The receptionist's counter is opposite the door as a visitor enters, and the open waiting room is to the right. There are soft toys for children to play with, magazines for adults, and many brightly colored booklets on the horrible fate awaiting unclean teeth. A stairway goes up to Dr. Moss' consulting room, where

she has her dentist's chair, equipment, x-ray, and so forth. When she finishes with one patient, she sends them down, and buzzes the receptionist to send up the next patient.

The current receptionist is Antony Stamsen, a college student who's taking a year out to save for his degree. He's also a Soldier of Creation, who spends a lot of time comforting the children due to see the dentist. While he is not happy with Alison's

curt manner toward them, he has to admit that her approach is effective. He's considering trying to persuade her to go to some personal emoting classes, where he hopes she can learn to express her emotions more constructively. He believes strongly in the effectiveness of such classes. On most nights, he leaves shortly after 6 p.m. when the work day is over, and he therefore has no idea of Aisha's night-time activities.

Aisha views Antony as just one in a long line of useless, vacillating, expendable receptionists. None of them ever manage to keep up with her pace for long – after all, she is able to bring superhuman stamina and concentration to her work. She has no idea that he is aware of the War at all, much less his affiliations. If she did realize what he was, she'd attempt to conceal her knowledge and use him to feed false information to the angels, as her Prince might require. She will admit that he is some use with the children, even though the little weaklings don't *deserve* such gentleness . . .



Aisha practices her trade as interrogator by night – and not every night, only when fellow Servitors of the Game bring a victim over. Standard practice is for them to call during the day, and book a future appointment for a person in a particular name. When Aisha checks the appointment books before closing in the evening, she notices the name and knows that there will be visitors that night. The code name is changed each time, to prevent any receptionists or curious readers from noticing that the same person keeps on making appointments and then failing to keep them. Aisha keeps her instruments of torture, straps, and handcuffs in a secret compartment in her desk, in her study next to the surgery. She takes great care to keep them clean and sterile – it's good practice. Conveniently, sodium pentothal (one of the usual anesthetics employed by dentists) is also a generally used "truth drug." Someone inspecting her orders from the local pharmacies might notice that she uses more muscle relaxants than seems strictly normal for a dentist . . .

Aisha, Habbalite of the Game

Aisha realizes how fortunate she is to have a Role that is so suited to a purifying, strengthening Punisher. She throws herself into it with such dedication that she's doing almost *too* well, and is liable to attract attention by the quality of her work. This danger hasn't occurred to her yet. She goes through a couple of receptionists every year. The job pays well, but she's very difficult to work with – while she isn't actively cruel to them, she is curt and businesslike and works them until they are totally exhausted. She dislikes cosmetic dentistry, which she considers a mask for the weak, and will lecture anybody who mentions it, using her resonance. She appears as a mid-30s brunette of medium height, with her hair tied back in a bun and with her nails always carefully cut short and clean.

Antony Stamsen, Soldier of Creation

Antony is a cheerful young man of African descent who likes working at this job. He hadn't expected to find a temporary position that would let him have such a feeling of contribution to the community. Although his employer is rather tense and curt, he can see that she has a real dedication to her job – and that's something that needs encouraging. He was recruited at 16 by an Ofanite of Creation who found that he had a natural sixth Force, and who occasionally stops by to check up on him. His personal hobby is playing the flute, which he does for friends in the local park in the evening.

PUBLIC PARKING GARAGE

*The man stopped in his tracks, looking at the steel boot on the front wheel of his car, then turned to his wife. "Look what you've done **now**. All that hassle over the dress, all that time wasted . . ."*

"I did it?" his wife shrieked. "Did I spend the last two hours poking around with old maps?"

The demon smiled as he walked away, considering other cars.

This multi-story parking garage is the main parking point for a number of businesses near it, including the



local hospital and police station. It is always full, always crammed with cars with forged parking permits propped in their front windows. Somewhere in its corridors, the parking wardens are busy ticketing illegally parked vehicles and booting serious offenders. They enjoy their job – then again, they *are* demons.

There are a fixed number of free places in the parking garage; all others require a permit from one of the local businesses who use it. If a car is parked in a reserved space, without a permit, then it is open to being ticketed and booted. Naturally, competition for the parking permits is brisk – the local businesses who own the



reserved spaces only give out a set number. It's common practice among the employees to claim false meetings or otherwise lie in order to get a temporary permit. If this fails, they'll forge their own, thus leaving even *fewer* spaces. Needless to say, it's the only parking garage for half a mile in any direction, and there are always people needing a space . . .

The manager of the garage is Stuart, an Impudite of Factions who is always happy to deal with aggrieved drivers. He is very good at directing their anger away from *him* and his assistants. He'll help them refocus it on other garage patrons – and take a little Essence for himself on the way. His main assistant is Tomas, a Djinn of Factions who protects the boots like his own children. Tomas regularly prowls the garage, hunting the illegally parked with an enthusiasm worthy of a better cause. If he can't find any illegally parked vehicles, he will ticket or boot a few of the legally parked ones, citing some variation of the law.

The aim of the Servitors of Faction is to produce argument, hatred, and general petty-minded vindictiveness. Every time that they recognize a forged parking permit in a car window, or hear a shouted argument, or know that they've put someone in a bad mood, they can feel that they're doing their job – and enjoying it. They haven't come to the notice of the police so far, and have a legal right to ticket or boot cars inside the parking garage.

If an angel parked there, and they recognized what he was, they'd take care *not* to molest his car. They would, however, forward his license plate number and details to any interested local Tethers. Of course, if they don't *know* that he's an angel, his car is fair game.

Stuart, Impudite of Factions

Stuart took over as manager of the parking garage 17 years ago, when the previous manager retired. His vessel appears as a friendly man in his late 50s, with wrinkles and a twinkle in his eye. He can easily soothe aggrieved drivers, helping them realize that it's all someone else's fault. He is usually found in his office, which is on the second story and very comfortable.

Tomas, Djinn of Factions

Tomas is surly and unpleasant, but always spotlessly clean. The only time that he can be seen smiling is when he's just booted a car, and hears the owner returning. Stuart got him this job, and inasmuch as he enjoys anything, he enjoys working here. He takes great care of the steel boots, and can quote factory specifications and details on all of them – and may become homicidal if they are damaged.



QUIK DRIVE

"Quik Drive here!" the secretary burbled cheerfully into the telephone mouthpiece. "So there are going to be three of you, and you'd like a Lincoln Town Car like last time?"

At some point, most people – humans and celestials alike – need to hire a vehicle, whether it's a car, a motorcycle, or a moving van suitable for transporting a dozen coffins. Tethers won't always have a spare car parked outside, and Soldiers get unwarrantably annoyed when a celestial master borrows their new motorcycle. Even if it does come back mostly in one piece. Fortunately, there is one particular car rental firm which is spreading across America, and is always willing to hire relatively cheaply, and on minimal identification.

Quik Drive is a recent arrival on the car rental scene, but its enthusiasm (and low prices) have brought it a lot of business. It provides everything from family cars to low-slung high-speed racers, and from heavy trucks to motorcycles. Its cheerful logo of a haloed figure balancing a car in either hand is often seen on billboards, and people in the know are talking about it as an excellent prospect for investment. The owner, Richard Goddard, has a harrowing schedule of business travel, constantly visiting branches of the firm to encourage the workers.

What most of the workers don't realize is that they're part of a huge criminal operation. The entire firm is a front (though a profitable front) to conceal a major vehicle theft operation. Vehicles are stolen, repainted and disguised, then moved across the country under the guise of being one of the firm's rentals. Once they're well out of the area, they're eventually resold. This may take from several months to a year, to allow time for the disturbance over the car's theft to die away. In the meantime, the repainted and renumbered car is used as a rental.

Richard Goddard is in fact Ricardo, a Balseraph of Valefor – who thought up this scheme after someone

called him a "used car salesman" once too often. It took him a lot of time and money to put it into operation, as he needed to get the firm established and well-spread before he started moving stolen cars through it. Things are *finally* beginning to get into gear, and money is starting to flow back into his pocket. He doesn't expect the scam to last forever, but is hoping it'll run for at least a few more years.

Branches of Quik Drive look very normal and professional. Some cars are on display, and a smiling staff waits to assist customers. However, Ricardo's paranoia shows through in record-keeping. *All* office records are kept on paper or on floppy disk, and nothing is stored on computers or on office networks. (He's aware that Servitors of Lightning could manage to get into the network.) Ricardo passes this off as a fondness for traditional methods, and fear of computer viruses. It also allows him to arrange confusing paper records for stolen cars, in case any of them should be traced. He doesn't pay much attention to the people who *rent* his cars, and hasn't realized that he may have a celestial clientele.

Ricardo, Balseraph of Theft, Quik Drive Director

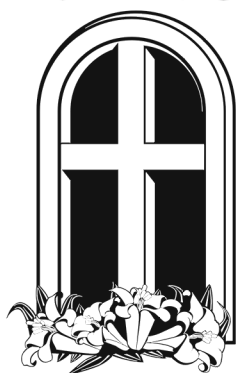
Ricardo looks like a lanky, go-getting type, in his late 20s, with a pair of glasses balanced on the end of his nose. His favorite role is that of the "boy genius," which he slips into when explaining the success of his firm to newspapers. When dealing with criminal connections, he becomes much more relaxed, and shows a dangerous edge.

If he ran into trouble with Trade, he'd consider giving them a chance to buy in on the operation rather than running for it. One thing is worrying him – he had to borrow the seed money from a Lilim acquaintance, and still owes her a large amount in both cash and Geases.

ST. JOHN'S ORPHANAGE

*The Lilim leaned back in her chair, and watched the scruffy boy across the table from her. "Look, kid. I won't lay that love bullshit on you any more, or that reform bullshit. Face it, society says you have to have a legal guardian for the moment. Now, if you work with me on this one, I can find you one with money that won't ride you too hard. All **you** have to do is look like the sort of kid they want. Then you're happy, they're happy, I'm happy . . ."*

St. John's Orphanage is an old institution, but one with a record of managing to find a good home for troubled children. Once church-based and Catholic, the amount of actual religious input into the place has dropped over the last couple of decades. Nobody would think that from the children's behavior, however. They come from broken homes, from the streets, and from abusive parents, but they leave as well-behaved youths, looking forward to making a home with their new families.



ST. JOHN'S ORPHANAGE

"A caring heart
and happy home"

578 West Court Ave

Derek Peterson, Director

For fostering opportunities, contact

Elle Latimer, at 278-8932.

Make a difference for a child

The building was erected in the late 19th century, and shows it. It's old, gray, and institutional, and in spite of the daily scrubbing the corridors smell of boiled cabbage and rotting paper. The bedrooms and classrooms are in better condition, and are up to national standards – barely. However, the attitude of enthusiasm, cooperation, and sheer good manners in the place convinces inspectors that it's clearly working. Dormitories are on the top floor, divided by partitions into cubicles, and classrooms and recreation rooms lie beneath them. The formal Head of

the orphanage is Derek Peterson, a well-meaning man who spends all his time in fund-raising and none of it with the boys.

Angels have given the place a cursory inspection, then left to spend their time on causes that need their attention more. In doing so, they've failed to notice Eleutheria, the Lilim of Fate who works there as a Fostering counselor. Eleutheria, under the identity of Elle Latimer, works to find the *right* foster parents for each child. In doing this, she's using her Fated Future attunement – and sometimes working under her Prince's direct instructions. If it makes no difference to a child's fate where he is placed, then she merely does her best to find him a good home, and extracts a Geas or two from both child and foster parents.

Eleutheria is a major factor in the "good atmosphere" that pervades the place. In her capacity as Fostering counselor, she is able to interview all the new arrivals as

soon as they arrive. During this interview, she explains frankly that she isn't offering them love, or affection, or any such "garbage." She's here to cooperate with them in finding a set of parents who will let them function in society, because society's laws demand it. If the boys will cooperate with her in presenting examples of good behavior, she'll see to it that they end up with wealthy parents in stable homes. A favor for a favor.

During this interview she utilizes her attunements and Songs to get the boys agreeing with her. The boys are usually motivated enough to go along with her proposals, resulting in the orphanage's splendid reputation. In return, Eleutheria does her best to get the boys into reasonably well-off and stable families – unless their Fates indicate differently.

On the other side of things, Eleutheria has a reputation among prospective parents as somebody who can arrange fostering or adoption. She also has a darker reputation, as someone who can arrange it even for people who have been formally refused as foster parents in the past. There are several people in the administration who owe her favors, and who will see to it that the necessary papers are issued. In these cases, Eleutheria collects favors from the *parents*, and often nudges them toward their fates. She does try to make sure that any catastrophes are delayed for at least a couple of years, so that St. John's shouldn't be connected with it. She realizes that the orphanage's reputation is her main shield against angels ever bothering to investigate, so she takes care to avoid any hint of scandal.

The facility is in a quiet part of town, next to one of the local parks. The boys are taken there for walks and recreation in the early evening, and at weekends. They are usually well-behaved, continuing the tradition which local residents have come to expect from the place. There is no actual “uniform,” but they all wear dark trousers and shirts in a sensible style, and any local resident would recognize “one of the boys from St. John’s.”

Pupils at the orphanage range between 11 and 16 years old. They are all male, as the orphanage has traditionally been single-sex. So far it has resisted suggestions that it should go co-educational, with the administration pointing out the *cost* of converting the place to handling girls as well as boys. (Eleutheria personally prefers it single-sex, as she finds teenage boys much easier to handle without other female diversions around the place.) The more intelligent boys quickly take to her suggestions, and work to present themselves as good adoption candidates. Less intelligent boys are bullied into behavior, or transferred elsewhere by someone else who owes Eleutheria a favor. Older boys may help the staff in supervising the younger ones. A couple of older boys have actually stayed on at the orphanage to be trained in teaching and similar skills, rather than leaving, and done part-time university courses for qualifications.

One of these “old boys” is Carlos Vestarre, who is by now entirely indoctrinated in Eleutheria’s mindset – that all of society is about contracts and deals. He has the potential to be a Soldier of Hell, but she feels that he serves better as a free collaborator. (Besides, if he became a full Soldier, he might be assigned elsewhere.) Carlos teaches basic English and History classes. He also provides minor illegalities such as alcohol and mild drugs to those pupils who can pay. Eleutheria realized that *someone* at the orphanage would fill this role, so she decided it

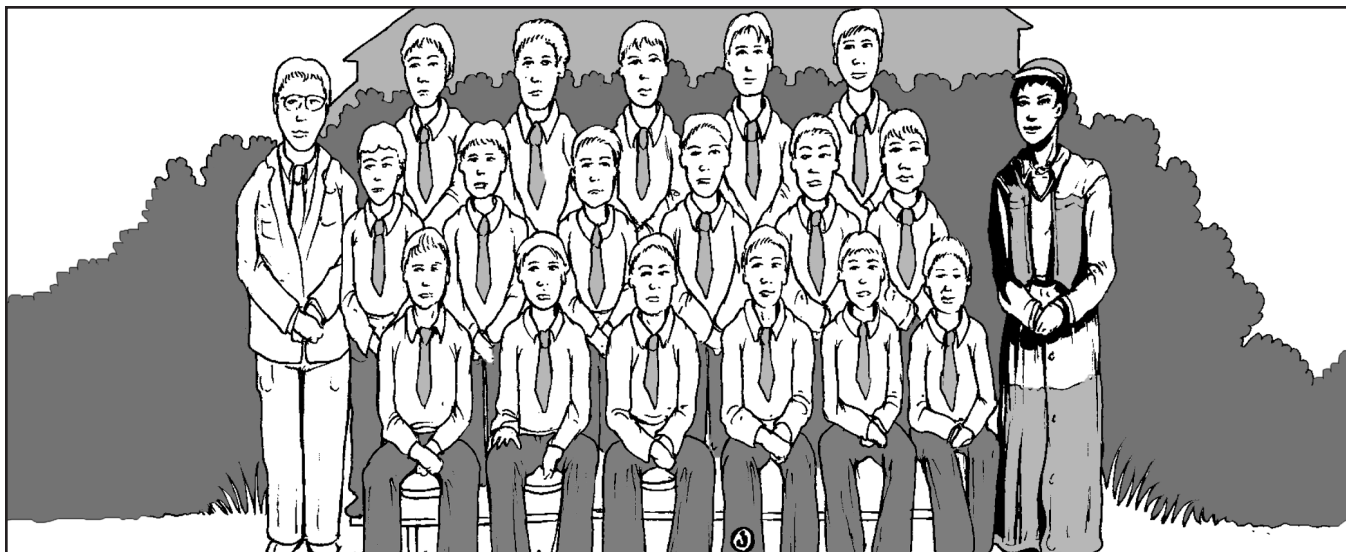
was simplest to make sure that she controlled the person who did. He works well with Eleutheria, and is still grateful to her for having helped him “make something of himself.”

Eleutheria, Lilim of Fate, Fostering counselor

Eleutheria is very happy with her life. She has been earning her Prince’s favor here for 15 years now, and is teaching humans that life *is* all about contracts and bargains. Though most of her work is long-term, this makes her that much less likely to be noticed by angels. She appears to be a woman in her early 30s, of Hispanic descent, her hair cut short in a smooth cap. She usually wears a dark suit and brightly colored top. She speaks freely with the boys, but assumes a more polite manner when talking to other members of staff, or to prospective foster parents. If she suspects that angels are nearby, she will fade into the background, or play the part of a well-meaning but ineffective counselor.

Carlos Vestarre, Assistant English Teacher

Carlos is cheerful and amoral. The pupils around him only matter to him because they provide his daily wages and comfortable job. He owes a number of favors to Eleutheria – in fact, he always seems to owe her for *something* – but passes off his urges to do whatever she says as due to natural gratitude. While he doesn’t know about the War, he has had a good Catholic upbringing, and would recognize the concept. He would also sign up with Hell quite happily, feeling that he would be far more comfortable there.



STARDUST CINEPLEX

The demon looked at the cheerful, happy crowds of teenagers, and his fingers twitched in his pocket. Yes. Oh yes. What a perfect . . . target population.

Stardust Cineplex stands at the center of a mall, proud and triumphant, displaying all the signs that show that a cineplex is prestigious – a dozen screens, a huge parking lot, and long lines. While it can't claim to get any of the new features in *earlier* than other cinemas, it offers theme-related souvenirs, refreshments, and even a nursery for toddlers. Dozens of local young people get summer or evening jobs selling tickets or popcorn. The entire place is a beacon for commercialism and modern film, its neon erection visible to passing planes.

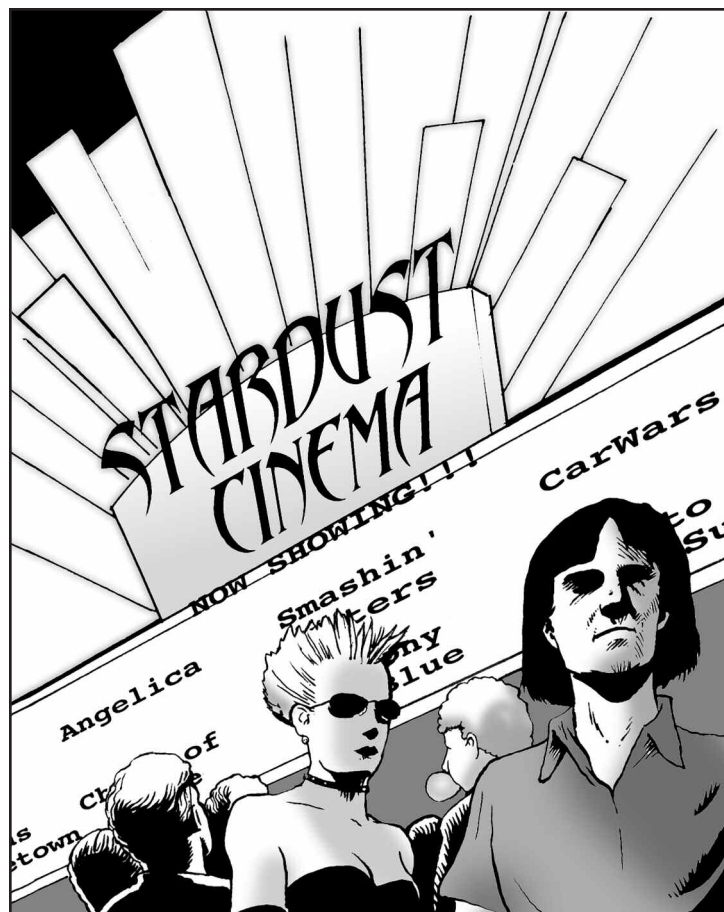
It's run by Francine, an Impudite of Nybbas who has a Role as its manager. Posing as "an American woman like anybody else," she's managed to install the day-care facilities and boost on-site medical care. Putting in these facilities has allowed Francine to attract a lot of people – parents, younger children, and so on – who would otherwise not have visited. She can therefore expose them all to the pleasant glow of the cinema screens more often, and accustom them to visiting as regularly as possible.

Naturally, it's in Francine's interest to keep the area crime-free, comfortable, and healthy. Unfortunately, a Habbalite of Vapula has just chanced on the area, and is looking for a controlled population to test out a number of new viruses he's been investigating. This Habbalite, Bochim, doesn't realize that the place is currently under any demonic influence – it seems so *nice*, and sweet, and pleasant. It clearly needs shaking up and awakening to the scourge that life truly is.

The cineplex itself is average in layout, with a few additions. There is a central entrance area, with ticket machines and counters, concession stands, and day-care and medical facilities. To either side a corridor extends, leading to six mid-sized theatres. Throughout the complex there are refreshment-sellers and ticket-checkers, with a couple of security guards in each of the two corridors. The security headquarters are upstairs, together with Francine's office and the administration offices. The whole complex is very busy at all hours of the day and night, and is open around the clock.

Francine, Impudite of Nybbas, Cineplex Manager

Francine, under the name of Frances Dramagno, has been managing and guiding the cineplex for the last five years. If she can keep it up for another five and convince Nybbas of her value, she might – she hopes – have a chance at the post of Seneschal somewhere. Nothing,



therefore, is more valuable to her than keeping the place quiet, happy, and full of viewers. She'll betray other demons to angels, backstab them to the Game, or just get her own thugs to move them out of town. Bochim's plans are her worst nightmare come true. She's blonde, pretty, and businesslike, seems to be in her early 40s, and claims to have been married in the past.

Bochim, Habbalite of Vapula, Experimental Scientist

Bochim has just left a Vapulan scientific center of excellence – just ahead of the angels who were busy burning it to the ground. He still has his Role as one Mark Bethels, businessman, though he worries that it's been traced. More importantly, he has a suitcase full of virus samples. If he can use them intelligently enough, and produce some good experimental results, he *might* be able to convince Vapula that he has potential. He's not stupid, however, and will scout the place out thoroughly before starting any experiments. He'll also take pains to observe and document the results fully. He appears to be in his mid-50s, with white hair and a gentlemanly air of confidence similar to his Prince's.

SUICIDE PREVENTION CENTER

"Hello," the Impudite murmured sweetly into the phone. "No, don't worry, I'm not here to judge you or anything . . . I'm just here to listen. And to try and help."

The Suicide Prevention Center is a recent development in the city, and is funded by private foundations – and therefore chronically in the red. There are branches at the local university and hospital, though the main center is in the Social Services buildings. Staff members at each location are ready to listen to any visitor's problems – but most of their work is done over the telephone.

HE FLIES, HE DIES, SHE CRIES

Tragedy struck on campus today as the team mascot, Captain Chicken, leapt from the stadium press box and fell to his death. The mascot, played by sophomore Darryl Tate, was a fixture at football games and University functions.

After talking to a volunteer at the Suicide Prevention Center, Darryl left a suicide note on the Jumbotron scoreboard, proclaiming his love for cheerleader Tasha Renquist, a senior. He then plummeted from the press-box, disrupting cheerleading practice.

"I never knew he felt that way," sobbed a distraught Renquist. "I mean, he's such a goober."

The suicide prevention volunteer is reportedly too upset to give an interview.

The branches, and indeed the main office, are all the same types of room – small, shabby, with posters on the walls, and battered armchairs and desks. There is a small anteroom where a receptionist (one of the staff, on rotation) handles visitors, and sends them in to see a counselor, if necessary. There are also a couple of small private offices, for individual counseling or work, and a larger room with half a dozen telephone lines for taking calls.

There are six people on shift at any given time – one at the front desk, and the other five working as counselors, either face to face or over the phone. Callers are not required to give their names or locations. The idea is simply for them to be able to talk, and hopefully to decide against committing suicide. On some occasions,

the Center gets a call from someone who has taken pills or injured himself, and is now too weak to save himself. In these cases, they try to learn his name and location, while contacting the police and ambulance services.

While there is a general rule of confidentiality, the Center keeps files on some of the more frequent callers. There will often be one particular member of the staff who regularly deals with them; they will keep such a file, indexing it by the first name or nickname that the caller gives. Such files are stored in a locked file cabinet in the main office – the key is kept in the office of the Head of the Center. They would *not* be shown to most outsiders, though they might be shared to the police or medical services in the case of an emergency.

The head of the Center is Julio Montalbez, a vigorous ex-nurse who sees it as a positive step toward preventing self-harm before it happens. He is often found manning one of the help lines, and dislikes the necessary fund raising and administrative work involved in his post. He is always glad to get new volunteers for the Center.

Unfortunately, one of these new volunteers is Cabbon, an Impudite of Dark Humor under the name of Cassie Benson. Cabbon's Role is as a student at the university, who has unselfishly volunteered her free time to help others. As an Impudite of Kobal, she doesn't take dissonance if her jokes cause the death of humans. This gives her a *lot* of latitude . . .

Julio Montalbez, Head of the Center

Julio is in his late 40s, a plump man with thinning gray hair and flabby hands, but with a great deal of genuine human compassion. He sets an excellent example to the other workers, inspiring them with his enthusiasm. However, he is very bad at recognizing actual malice or evil, and always looks for extenuating circumstances.

Cabbon, Impudite of Dark Humor, Help Line Volunteer

Cabbon is a smug young Impudite, with frizzy black hair and heavy eye makeup, who is just beginning to explore the benefits of this position. She's able to use her resonance over the phone, and can easily charm people out of killing themselves, giving her a *high* success rate. This lets her pick the odd victim for a really amusing suicide. She is an intelligent psychologist, and has a lot of friends at the university.

TOMBSTONE ARMS

The Habbalite whistled to himself cheerfully as it stacked explosives. "And when one dumb human should let a grenade fall, there'll be no dumb humans sitting on the wall . . ."

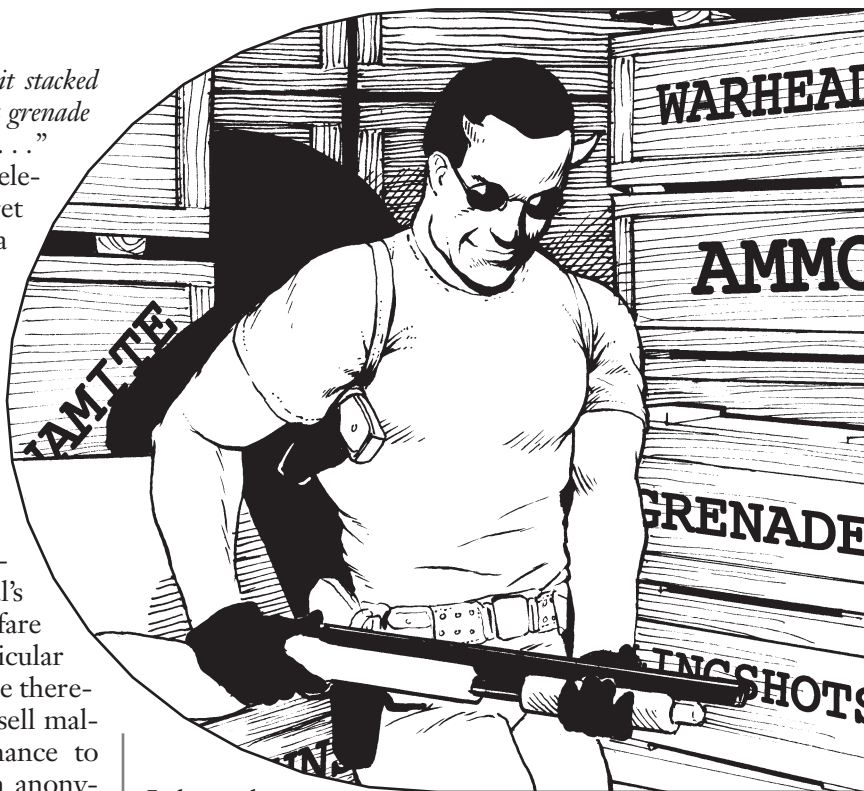
Tombstone Arms won't be found in any telephone directory or street map. It's a secret weapons stock, hidden away in the cellars of a derelict tenement building. (And it's a tenement building that's going to *stay* derelict, as long as certain local weapons-buyers influence the city council.) Run by Semaiah, a Habbalite of the War, the business provides weapons to demons and to local humans. However, the humans don't always get what they pay for.

While Semaiah provides reliable weapons to other demons, he doesn't necessarily do so for humans. The whole area is rife with constant gang violence. He is interested (on Baal's orders) in encouraging a continual state of warfare in the vicinity, and making sure that no particular gang gets the upper hand – for the moment. He therefore sells to everyone. His *favorite* tactic is to sell malfunctioning weapons, while using his resonance to drive the new owners into paranoia. He then anonymously tips the police off that the customers are packing serious heat, and sits back to enjoy the show.

Everyone in the area who buys guns and ammunition knows about Semaiah. His "neutrality" is respected (after a few nasty incidents with C-4 explosive) and nobody has tried to pressure him for at least three years now. However, memories of the last time are fading, and several gangs are planning to persuade him that he should only be selling to *them*.

The weapons store itself is very well protected. The stairway down to the cellars has monitor cameras set along it, so Semaiah can check on who's visiting, and there is a heavy reinforced metal door. A grill allows Semaiah to confirm the identity of "shoppers." This done, they're allowed into the small antechamber beyond, where all negotiations take place. Semaiah will only allow fellow demons to actually enter the store – humans have to stay outside. He collects new arms shipments once a fortnight, via truck; arrangements are made to distract the police elsewhere in town to cover this.

Irshemesh, a Shedite of Factions, has been in the area for a year, and *loves* the current situation. Admittedly it didn't know about Semaiah when it started work in the area, but it soon realized that the weapons dealer was a demon, after seeing him use his resonance. Irshemesh is partly responsible for keeping the current state of gang warfare so bitter. If Semaiah *did* realize there was a Servitor of Factions in the area, he would want



Irshemesh

removed at once. He would be so inspired by Princely rivalry that he might even try leaking information to angels to get them to do the job.

Semaiah, Habbalite of the War, Weapons Dealer

Semaiah *bates* stupidity. He could barely tolerate it among the demons in Hell, and he detests it even more here among the idiotic, moronic, brainless humans that *waste* the Earth and all the blessings of God. It gives him the greatest of pleasure to help them wipe each other out. His manner is curt and clipped, and he has the bearing of an ex-army man, with short-cut dark hair. In his Role, Sam Miles, he always wears dark glasses and thin leather gloves.

Irshemesh, Shedite of Factions, Manipulator

The best that can be said about Irshemesh is that it enjoys its job. Equally, the worst that can be said about it is that it enjoys its job of causing division, quarreling, and general mayhem. To it, no argument is complete without a few good injuries. One of Malphas' more violent Shedim, it is very bad at hiding its presence in a peaceful neighborhood. It does just fine in a strife-riddled area, however.

VANX PHARMACY

*The pharmacist stacked the bags. "There you are, Mr. Collins. Everything you wanted." He lowered his voice slightly. "And I mean **everything**."*

Vanx Pharmacy, part of a nation-wide chain, is a small drug store in the center of town, not far from the hospital. A lot of patients are sent there to pick up their prescriptions. It is also widely used by people just doing general shopping, as it has a variety of cosmetics and other products. The manager, Bernard Johnson, has been working there for a couple of years now, sent by the company administration. The assistant pharmacist, Matt Sorel, has worked there for the last 30 years and through several changes of manager.

Bernard Johnson is still working on winning the trust of the locals. He's helped in this by his assistant Matt, who nobly backs him up and speaks well of him to everyone coming to get a prescription filled. Bernard appreciates this – he was afraid at first that Matt would feel bitter that someone else had been promoted in over his head yet again. However, their business relationship seems to work extremely well.

The fact of the matter is that Matt is actually a demon – Matthias, Balseraph of Technology, purveyor of drugs to the neighborhood. The local dealers and users know "good old Matt" very well indeed. He provides them with non-prescription drugs, from some private source of his. Attempts to pressure him to share his source have caused a number of very nasty accidents . . . enough to make people leave him alone, and just buy his products – which are very reasonably priced.

As a Servitor of Vapula, Matthias has access to a number of illegal drugs from other Servitors of his Prince. He obtains others by diluting prescription stock and falsify-

ing quantity orders. He takes care that the people who actually *get* the watered-down drugs as prescriptions aren't likely to notice or to complain.

Recently, the hospital nearby has been making plans to remove the current on-site pharmacist and get a replacement. Bernard has got wind of this, and is maneuvering to be able to open a branch there – he feels that Matthias could handle the job, and *deserves* it. Matthias is in two minds about it. While it would give him all sorts of opportunities, it would also put him in the middle of the hospital and in charge of the operation there, raising the risk of his being spotted by angels. For the moment, he's playing the part of the modest subordinate, and trying to decide which way to push things.

The pharmacy is to the rear of the drugstore, and is out of direct view through the street window. Matthias manages all the sorting and stocking of products, which allows him to hide his own stocks of drugs and illegal substances under false labels and at the backs of cupboards. It would take a determined search through all the containers to find his stocks.

Matthias, Balseraph of Technology

Matthias is a young Balseraph of Technology, and has only been on Earth for 50 years now. (He was the victim of deliberate misfiling by a higher-ranking demon, who wanted to get the ambitious youngster out of *his* laboratory.) Matthias appears as a pudgy man in his late 40s, balding, with unusually sharp eyes. He plans to take things slowly but surely, building up a clientele and a cover. Eventually he hopes to be allowed to test some of the latest drugs from Technology on the people who he regularly supplies, both legally and illegally. He has heard, for instance, that Vapula is planning some sort of variation on Viagra . . .

The Mercurian dangled against the wall, held there by one of the burly men while the other pounded a fist into his belly. "You're making a terrible mistake . . ." he gasped. "I was just looking for a souvenir . . ."

"Uh huh," the one holding him grunted. "That's why your friend yelled, 'Attack, in the name of God and Dominic!', right?"

The Mercurian spat out blood from a split lip. "And did you know that there are some Soldiers of God with big guns right behind you? Really, really big guns?"

DISPUTED TERRITORY

ARCHAIC ANTIQUES

"You like it?" The plump man grinned, and brushed lank hair back off his forehead. "You've got taste. That one's genuine. Look," he pointed, "there's the maker's mark."

Outside, the Soldier of Hell squinted through the window as Miles Prendergast went through his usual routine. The housewife who was his current victim looked as bored as the Soldier felt. Careful, he reminded himself. There are angels around . . .

This pretentiously named shop is full of moderately interesting junk, spiced up by the occasional genuine antique. While not particularly valuable to connoisseurs, it's fun for the less well-educated, and for those who simply like rummaging through second-hand bits and pieces. 1920s costume jewelry spills out of Art Deco vases; letter-openers are displayed on top of battered desks; old briefcases are piled in corners; beaded scarves are knotted on display rails and flutter in the draft. Every surface is stacked with ornaments and oddities.

The shop has been buying and selling for the last 60 years, as the current owner, Miles Prendergast, took over from his father on the latter's death. Miles has the shop open to visitors from ten until six, Monday to Saturday, but keeps it closed on Sunday. Not out of any particular religious sentiment, but because he likes to go fishing.

Archaic Antiques hadn't managed to attract any regular celestial customers before. It wasn't authentic enough for Destiny, it wasn't profitable enough for Trade, and there wasn't really anything worth stealing. However, the shop has recently acquired watchers from both sides of the War.

Miles Prendergast bought an authentic period sword, a Cavalier rapier from England, as part of a job lot in a recent auction. It's currently hanging on a wall at the back of the room, as he doesn't feel that it really "suits the ambiance of the front window." He's taken pains to polish it and clean it, and inspection shows that it is a classic – and still-deadly – weapon.

What he *doesn't* know is that the sword belonged to a family of humans, one of whom in each generation was a Soldier of Laurence. In the 1930s the current holder of the sword was killed, and the sword was picked up by a Servitor of Theft who was nearby. The Thief later sold it illegally to a collector, who passed it on to somebody else . . . until, by chance, the sword ended up at Archaic Antiques. (The family of humans still exists, and continues to provide a Soldier of Laurence every generation, sword or no sword.)

The sword doesn't have any attunements, or powers, or celestial oddities about it. It is just an exceptionally beautiful piece of work, and recognizable – to any Servitor of Laurence, and possibly to other people – as being of a style used by Soldiers of Laurence. Miles thinks it's just an antique, if one in exceptionally good condition.

Unfortunately, the Balseraph of the War who happened to notice the sword recognized it. Louis, being a Balseraph with a Discord of Paranoia/3, became convinced that it was some sort of trap. While he very much wanted the sword – both as a souvenir from Heaven's forces, and because it was a beautiful weapon – he was sure that it couldn't be there *by accident*. No, it had to be a deliberate ambush of some sort for him. Fired with enthusiasm, he has set a couple of local Soldiers of Hell to watch the shop in the hopes of spotting the angels who no doubt are waiting to catch him. He's considering calling in some more demonic help, to make certain that he isn't outnumbered.

A day or so after Louis noticed the sword and laid his plans, an angel also saw the sword. Pietro, Ofanite of Judgment, noticed the sword through the window while checking out the area. He had a number of Laurencian friends, and recognized the design of the sword at once. However, he also noticed the not-overly-adept Soldier of Hell who was lurking in the vicinity, and decided that the entire location must be a trap. He found some local Soldiers of God, and instructed them to watch the area, so that they could catch the demons in their own snare. He has also notified some of his Laurencian friends, and expects them to arrive soon.

The shop is currently doing excellent business, as every so often one of the Soldiers (from either side) finds some excuse to come in and buy something. Miles isn't perceptive enough to have noticed the people hanging around and watching, and doesn't feel in the least bit tense. Some of the people from the nearby stores, however, *have* noticed the watchers, and are growing worried. Current opinion is tipped between whether they're FBI, police, or Mafia. The woman who runs the laundromat opposite is absolutely convinced that they're FBI, and that Miles is running a drugs operation from the back room of the shop. (She will explain in detail about how his Sunday fishing trips are really secret visits to collect the new stocks of cocaine from his suppliers.)

The whole situation is liable to tip over into violence the moment that somebody makes a wrong move. One can hope that the innocent humans involved don't get caught in the crossfire . . . This could turn into a bloodbath, or into a Keystone Kops comedy of errors.



Miles Prendergast, Store Owner

Miles is in his late 50s, balding, plump, and comfortable. He enjoys a good chat, and a good story. If he doesn't know the past history of interesting items in his store, then he makes something up – though he isn't dishonest and won't raise the price. He's been keeping the store for 20 years now, and hopes to pass it on to his niece eventually. His niece, Marlene Prendergast, is a romance-reading blonde who works as a kindergarten teacher at the local school. She's kind and helpful, in a woolly-minded way. Neither of them have any concept of the War.

Louis, Balseraph of the War

Louis has carried paranoia to a fine art – which explains why, despite good weapons skills, he's never achieved a Distinction. Even if he saw a demon whom he didn't know in full demonic form, he'd be likely to suspect that it was an angel masquerading. The current situation has only inflamed his paranoia, as one of his Soldiers has reported seeing a possible Soldier of God in the area. This has convinced him that his suspicions are entirely correct. If anybody in the area evinces angelic powers, he will attempt to quietly kidnap them and question them for details. Nothing will persuade him that the whole thing isn't some sort of devious plot. He views the sword as somehow key to the whole affair, and won't leave town without it.

Pietro, Ofanite of Judgment

Pietro is a perfectly normal Ofanite of Judgment. Naturally, he is constantly on the watch for heresy, treason, and deviousness. Seeing a Soldier of Hell lurking outside a place where an unmarked weapon of Heaven was prominently displayed convinced him – quite accurately – that there was an ambush plotted. He is hoping to capture a demon or two alive, so that they can explain their plans to him, and incriminate any angelic allies. (After all, they must have got hold of the sword somehow.) He is looking forward to handing over the sword to his Laurencian friends, as he feels they will appreciate it as only Servitors of the Sword truly can. Pietro is on roving circuit duty, and is not currently attached to a Triad of Judgment.

BOY SCOUTS HALL

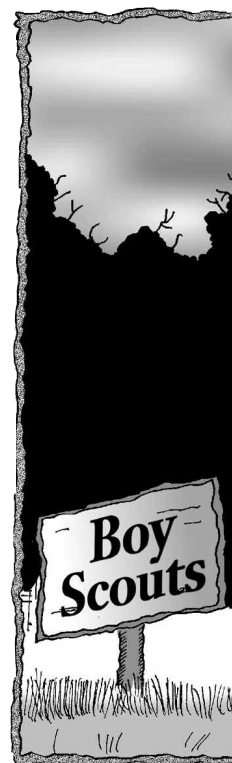
The Scout stood up and faced the rest of his troop. "Well, I think they're burglars. Who else would be sneaking around in an unmarked car in trench coats? And one of them was carrying a gun. And a sword. I vote we go there tomorrow and say we're weeding gardens and see if we can find anything interesting."

The local Boy Scout troop meets at this old parochial hall every week, with the Scouts gathering in their patrols to work for merit badges and plan good deeds. One might have thought that such an ethical and vigorous group would have angelic involvement, but not in this case. This troop is totally human – and capable of being as helpful or as awkward as any group of humans.

The old hall itself has been standing since the 1920s, and shows it. The drainpipes outside are rusty. The paint on the walls is peeling. Inside, the large room is kept clean and tidy, swept before and after every meeting. The Scouts keep their equipment (ropes, paper, pens, tools, and so on) in boxes along the sides of the hall. They meet once a week, but may get together on other occasions in patrols for general assistance, or to work on merit badges.

The local Scoutmaster is Jack Devlin, an earnest young man in his early 30s, who holds down a day job as a teacher at the local school. He has only recently taken over the troop from the previous Scoutmaster, who was in his 60s and very unadventurous. He hopes to raise the troop's profile locally, through general acts of helpfulness, supporting charities, and so on.

Jack encourages the Scouts to go out in groups to work on their badges (never alone) and to be, as he puts it, "helpful *without* needing to be asked." This has led to people not being able to fall over in the district without having Scouts pounce on them ready to splint their broken legs – but one has to start somewhere.



The Scouts are as inquisitive and eager to be heroes as any children of that age. They yearn for a disaster that will let them save the day. They'll happily investigate local oddities, unless reined in by Jack or by some other adult that they respect. If angels or demons are lurking in the neighborhood, indulging in fights or attracting attention, they may get more scrutiny than they anticipated.

The Scouts can also be useful; they have some training in practical skills, they can run errands, watch places, and go to areas that an adult would have to avoid. Of course, any angel actually *endangering* a human child had better have a very good reason to do so. But if a celestial wants information about an area, he could do worse than ask the troop for gossip.

Jack Devlin, Scoutmaster

Jack is a normal man, with mainstream Christian beliefs, and no knowledge of the War. He enjoys working with children, and is patient and firm with them. He also has the invaluable gift of being able to persuade them into sensible behavior. If he finds people trying to *use* his troop or endanger the boys, he will do everything that he can to stop it. However, he does from time to time wish he had an assistant Scoutmaster. He would also be grateful for people to come and coach the Scouts in useful skills, such as fire-building (though not explosive-handling, rifle-shooting, or grand theft auto . . .)



SCOUTS AS CHARACTERS

It's possible to have a one-shot game, or an entire campaign, using Boy or Girl Scouts as characters (either humans, or celestials with odd Roles). This might offer a very different perspective on the world and the War, as there are places that children can't go and things that children can't do . . .

CITY AIRPORT

The angel of Laurence eyed the electronics-festooned gate in front of him. "I still think that this is stupid," he muttered to the woman beside him. "In a decent society, a man wouldn't have to hide his sword."

The woman sighed, her gaze becoming distracted as the Kyriotate of Jean possessing her exercised its resonance. "Don't worry. I've got the gate. Just walk right through."

Although angels and demons may rarely need to travel by plane, given the existence of Tethers, this doesn't mean they will never need airports. Not everywhere has convenient Tethers. Soldiers and other humans will have to use them, and may need escorting. Renegades and Outcasts often need to use purely human systems of transportation, and are forced to submit to Customs like any mortal. Important people may pass through the airport, and need meeting, or ambushing, or kidnapping, or hijacking . . .

Thirty years ago, a Soldier of Lightning named George Selts gleefully seized the opportunity to remodel the local airport with the zeal of the convert. He took care to work out the building and procedure plans based on suitable mathematical fractal compression models. As the work progressed, he felt sure that he would be able to claim a truly *efficient* design, a scheme that would be a paean to skillful engineering and to forward-planning.

George Selts died of a heart attack shortly afterward (aggravated by his habit of overwork), but his legacy lives on. Perhaps if everyone who used the airport did so *logically*, obeying all directives, and waiting their turn in lines, then it would function like the well-oiled machine of which he dreamed. However, humans are only humans even at the best of times, and are thoughtless illogical line-jumpers far more often. The airport is therefore a seething mass of humanity, and is only aggravated by the many bureaucratic directives which have attempted to solve its problems. Interference by angels, demons, secret services, terrorists, criminal conspiracies, sorcerers, and just plain humans hasn't done anything to make matters simpler.

This airport serves both domestic and international flights. It has four main terminals, extending crosswise around a central hub; Terminal One handles domestic flights only, Terminals Two and Three have both domestic and international flights, and Terminal Four has only international flights. There are car parking facilities around the airport, depending on which terminal is being visited and the length of the visit. Naturally, it is nearly impossible to find a parking place close to the required terminal. Each terminal processes passengers to and from flights, containing metal detectors, Customs staff, ticket clerks, and all the necessities of modern air travel.

The central hub houses the airport communications, navigational systems, security headquarters, administration, and so on. While there are a couple of entrances for passengers wanting to make a query or complaint – should they be able to *find* them – all other doors have electronic locks requiring a pass card. There are always a couple of spare security teams present who can be dispatched to problem areas, if an emergency is reported. Security staff are unarmed, but all have their own badges, crisp uniforms, and walkie-talkies. In the case of a bomb being reported, the police are contacted at *once*, and the area in question is cleared of all personnel, both airport staff and passengers. This can cover any mysterious package or baggage noticed lying around loose, and there is almost always some area of the airport being cordoned off for investigation. There are a number of security cameras scattered through the airport, which feed to the security headquarters in the hub. However, not all the screens can be watched at any one time, and a temporary “malfunction” for a second or two usually passes unnoticed.

Naturally, both Heaven and Hell are interested in controlling the airport. It's a convenient position for watching for new celestials coming to town. It also makes it easier to get one's own celestials on flights out of town, and transport (or smuggle) items. Currently neither Heaven nor Hell has full control of the airport, though both sides have representatives present. Both sides are working to insert more of their own agents, and identify those of the other side.

Cassiel, Habbalite of Fate, Customs Officer

Cassiel, a Habbalite of Fate, works in Customs. She watches for people looking guilty, then uses Fated Future to determine whether their Fate would be better served by uncovering their smuggling, or by letting them go. If she decides to have them caught, she sometimes searches their baggage herself, and sometimes uses her resonance to trigger them into obviously suspicious behavior in front of the other Customs officers. If she should iden-

tify an angel, she will search their luggage (on general principles) and take the opportunity to check their passport for personal details – which will be forwarded on to local demonic Tethers. She has been working at the airport for seven years now, under the Role of Cassia Frith, and appears to be a stocky, middle-aged woman with short brown hair and an accusing glare. Jonathan knows of her presence, but the forces of Heaven are ignorant. Naturally, she's trying to get a few more procedures added to standard Customs regulations.

Jonathan, Balseraph of the Game, Airport Security

Jonathan is an enthusiastic Balseraph of the Game, who views this as the stepping-stone to bigger things. The whole place is incredibly reassuring, and reminds him of home. He intends to do a perfect job here – and if that involves a little covering-up of problems, he believes himself capable of that. He managed to get a post in Security headquarters two years ago, and uses it to keep informed of odd goings-on in the airport. Particularly interesting are reports of unusual behavior, strange malfunctions of metal detectors, and so on. He will not direct any security teams to investigate these things *unless* they impact on a current demonic operation that he's been informed of. He will take down details, however, for later reporting to his Superior. His Role goes by the name of John Chan, and he appears as a laid-back Oriental man, somewhere in his mid-40s, with the habit of always taking notes. Naturally, he's trying to get some of *his* procedures added to standard Security regulations.

Both he and Madian (below) are aware of each other's existence. Both have decided that holding their current position is more useful than trying to force the other out, and probably losing their own job in the process – as it would get extremely messy. Asmodeus and Dominic both seem content with this state of affairs for the moment, on the principle of knowing *where* one's enemy is. However, this has stopped both Madian and Jonathan from being able to insert more agents into Airport Security (angels, demons, Soldiers of God, or Hellsworn) as what one attempts, the other can block. The two have been known to cooperate, very occasionally and on direct orders from their Superiors, to locate Renegades and Outcasts.

Madian, Ofanite of Judgment, Airport Security

Madian has been in Airport Security for 15 years now, with a Role as a common guard, under the name of Meredith Summers. She manages to move between the

terminals at a speed impossible for anybody except an Ofanite, turning up at any major incidents. While she doesn't have Jonathan's rank, she does have a spotless record of long service, resulting in most of the security staff paying a lot of attention to her opinions. If she notices any demonic or Outcast activity, she will contact her Dominican superior in town, the local police, and the security staff – depending on which is most effective. On the other hand, she will attempt to smooth over any angelic activity which has caused a disturbance. She is tall, lean, and has gray-streaked blonde hair which she wears cut short; she speaks with a pronounced Texas accent. Of course, she is adding some of her own guidelines to standard Security behavior.

Sigionoth, Kyriotate of Jean, Baggage Handling

Sigionoth is a recent arrival at the airport, as of just a few months ago, and has found several very convenient hosts among the men and women who move luggage to and from the planes. Its resonance allows it to possess suspicious bags and check on their contents. Should it discover anything illegal, it may decide to arrange an "accident" in which the bag is opened and the contents are seen, or it can pass the information to Madian for later use. So far, Madian is the only celestial to know of Sigionoth's presence at the airport. Jonathan and Cassiel suspect nothing. Sigionoth is curious, intelligent, and thoroughly enjoying its current work, alternating regularly between the baggage handlers. The only problem is that while exposing illegal baggage or informing Madian about it, Sigionoth has no way of knowing that the baggage may belong to an *angel*. He'll be planning to add a few standard guidelines to Baggage Handling procedures as soon as he works out what would be most efficient.



CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

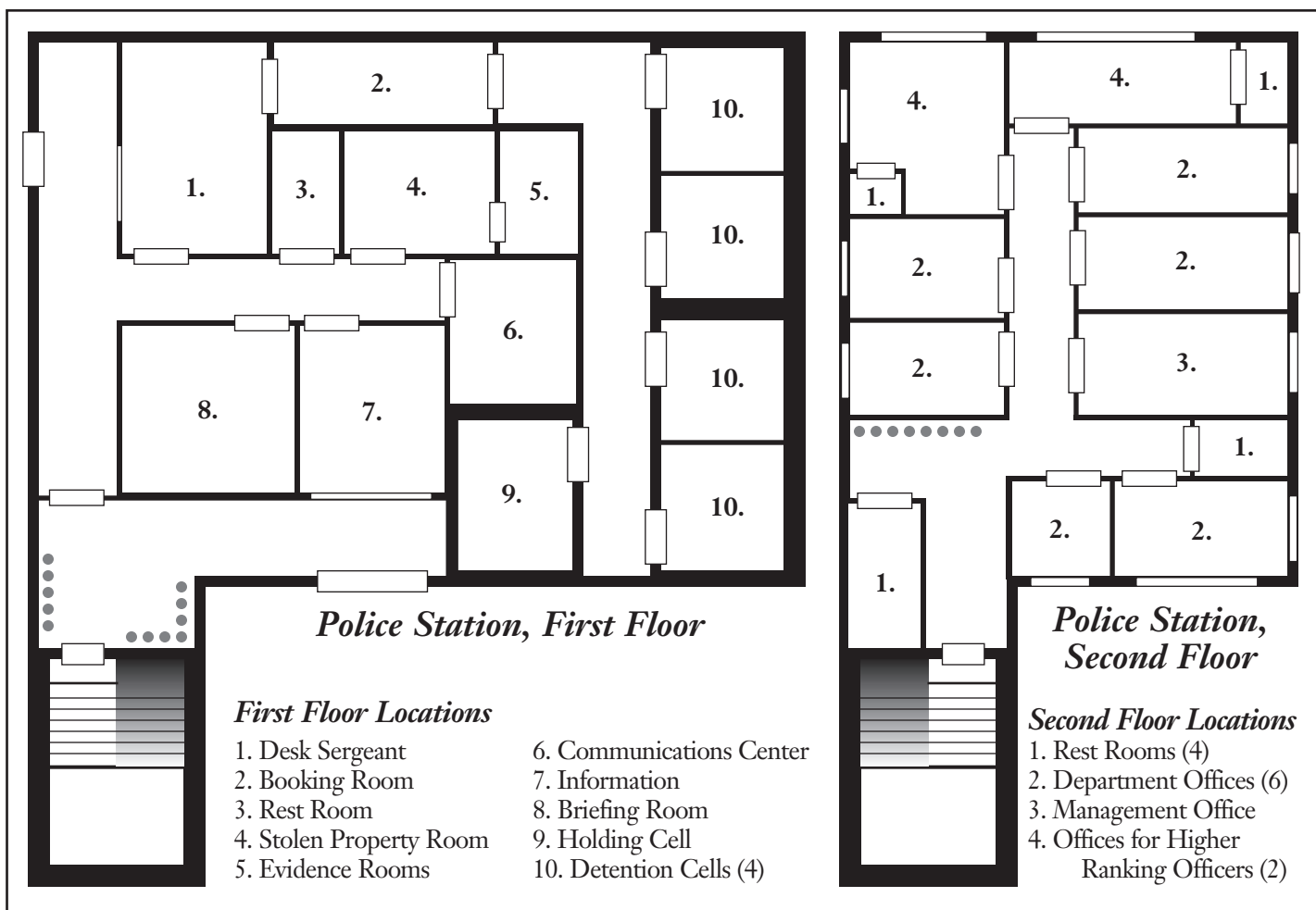
In the cell next to Solon, Alexis hissed. "I don't know how they did it! They shouldn't have been able to track us that far – not that quickly!"

The Lilim muttered something under her breath and looked over her shoulder at the camera there. Monitored, definitely, as they'd found when Alexis tried to tear her bunk off the wall in a tantrum.

This police department isn't sited in a *truly* big city, and is therefore only of medium size. It occupies a small, two-story building adjacent to City Hall, and is over-staffed, with 25 officers and detectives, as well as Chief Alexandra Domokos (the only one who gets an office to herself) and the three Shift Commanders (Lt. Levy, Lt. Martin, and Lt. Hart). There are five cells

in the station – one holding cell, and the other four paired off with thick cement walls between them, and doors separating the two pairs of cells from each other and the holding cell. Especially troublesome or suicidal prisoners are transferred to the county jail as soon as an officer can be spared to make the trip – usually only an hour or two at most.

The area near the station is well-lit, and parking is forbidden around the entrances. The station was carefully designed with few windows, and they all have Plexiglas in them, not plate glass. Each exterior door is monitored, to see who passes in and out, and has actual security: a lock, card-pass, or simply someone always on duty where they can watch the door. To one side, there is a separate entrance to which only the officers have keys. On off-duty hours, opening that door sets off an alarm so that someone in Dispatch can glance over and see if they recognize the person there. All doors *except* those to the detention area have Plexiglas windows in them, to prevent someone hiding behind them to surprise an officer.



The building has emergency lighting and power – *especially* given that there are electronic security measures! Calabim may destroy the power lines going *in* to the station, but will have to take out the emergency power as well. (One generator relies on natural gas, and will function unless the natural gas mains are somehow cut.) Kyriotates of Jean will have to possess more than one set of wiring.

Most important to celestials will be the rooms where evidence and recovered stolen property are kept; the Communications Center (aka “Dispatch”), containing phones, radio, fax machines, and computer equipment, handles incoming calls and dispatching and is in an internal room for security reasons; and the Detention Cells. The separate divisions and squads (Vice, Forgery, Homicide, etc.) have their offices on the second story, as do the higher-ranking officers and management.

Just Visiting

Visitors to the police station aren’t allowed to wander around unsupervised. Getting into a police station is

“invitation only.” There is an information desk facing the door, and visitors have to sign in while an escort is called. Complaints are also made here, in person or by phone; the information desk usually has one experienced officer and some less-experienced ones or cadets, who deal with the public and media. Currently Dana O’Sullivan, Kyriotate of Michael, is finding herself stationed here a lot.

Go Directly . . .

Once someone has been arrested, they’re taken into custody by the Desk Sergeant (who is *not* the person at the front of the station who talks to incoming public). The desk is more a wall, thick and high, and reinforced to protect from shrapnel or light weapons fire. The view from the desk is clear, without potted plants or other cover for anyone who might wish to sneak up to it. The Booking and Processing room is adjacent to the Desk Sergeant’s desk, and leads straight into the holding cells.

Prisoners keep almost *nothing* with them. The police take belts, shoes (especially those with shoelaces), jewelry,

wallets, and anything in the pockets; only basic clothing is left. If a prisoner tries to harm himself with what he's left wearing, even that will be taken and replaced with paper clothing. Cells are not very comfortable, aside from the lack of privacy. Short-term detention cells ("holding cells") do not have a toilet – there is a rest room that prisoners can be escorted to by an officer. Other cells have a bunk, a sink, and a toilet.

Cells traditionally have the bars that open into the hallway, but are separated from each other by concrete walls, so that prisoners may talk to each other, but not see into each other's cells. "Sight and Sound" regulations prohibit male and female (or adult and juvenile) prisoners from being able to see or hear each other. Each cell has its own camera and microphone, and is monitored by Dispatch. While yelling or odd behavior isn't paid *that* much attention by the dispatchers, anyone trying to damage himself or his surroundings will cause Dispatch to call for an officer to go into the cell block.

Prisoners are never left unsupervised.

In The Cars

All the police cars assigned to this station contain laptop computers. Whether the police are inside the station or not, they have access to the FBI-sponsored National Crime Information Computer Database (NCIC). With the NCIC, they can enter in almost any data and get data on nearly anything stolen that has a serial number, and anyone who has ever got a driver's license or social security number, or is wanted for a felony *anywhere* in the United States. Every day, each patrol car is assigned sections of the city – the officer's "beat." Unless called out of their beat by Dispatching, the patrol car won't leave it. The officers patrol, write tickets, and respond to calls within their beat. Cars have either one or two officers in them depending on the danger of the area they patrol. If they have to respond to a dangerous call, more than two cars will be assigned to it.

Responses To Trouble

All on-duty police officers carry a gun. They do not take it off, even if they're on inside duty. They don't keep it in a locker, or inside their desk, but on their belts, ready to use in an emergency. (And in some parts of the country, such emergencies have occurred *within* policed stations.) Violence-prone celestials can try to materialize in the middle of the station with automatic weapons, but the officers within are *not* sitting ducks. Much to the consternation of the angel or demon, they will probably wind up with a destroyed or badly damaged vessel, a lot of Symphonic noise, and a visit from other celestials who do not approve of all the disturbance.

Notable Staffing

There is indeed a celestial presence at this Department – *and* an ethereal one. So far, the three non-humans suspect the existence of another of their kind – in the town, if not the department itself – but haven't yet made positive ID. They just know *someone* is around who isn't a human. They *don't* know that there are two other culprits, and the celestials have no idea that there's an ethereal about.

Lt. Larry Hart, Lesser Faerie Noble, Third Shift Commander

The third Shift Commander, Larry Hart, is not entirely what he seems. Once, he was a low-ranking Seelie noble by the name of Llyweilun – then came Purity's Crusade. Llyweilun found that hiding in the Marches was insufficient, and he had to seek refuge back on Earth, using the vessel of a young baby. He found this tactic successful enough that he kept on repeating it through the centuries.

In his latest Role, "Larry" had a rough life, being removed from an abusive home at an early age and bounced around foster homes until he reached adulthood. Still, he managed to find the discipline to get decent grades, and to join the police force. He was assigned to this Department after he graduated, and has been there for the past 12 years. He's known as an active, enthusiastic man who's never unhappy to work the midnight shift. He's also one of the most *mundane* people around.

Larry doesn't spend Essence often, and he tries very hard not to do anything that might cause disturbance, even though he's got a Role/6 as a police officer. (Indeed, he's been on Earth long enough that sometimes he *himself* forgets he's something more than a mortal!) He knows that someone else in the neighborhood has been causing disturbance, but has incorrectly assumed that it's a Servitor of the Wind or Theft, breezing through town every now and then.

Officer Dana O'Sullivan, Kyriotate of Michael

Enanlah is young, new to Earth, and almost convinced that she's in a make-work job, except for the occasional spate of Symphonic disturbance around the department. When she graduated from the academy, she was informed by her superior officer (celestial) that she was being placed in this town to watch for demonic infiltration. Enanlah wasn't told *why* this place (which she thinks is Dullsville) was potentially in danger of infernal invasions, but she's doing her job. She's also possessing some of the local birds or cats, most of the time, which helps her do her patrols.

In her medium-level Role as Dana O'Sullivan, she's also a rookie cop who's learning the ropes. A small, red-haired woman in her Michaelite vessel, she initially received a lot of teasing from the rest of the department for her dainty appearance. The teasing eased off when she got into a brawl with a drunk suspect, but she's still the rookie woman cop.

Braz, Shedite of the Game

The meaning of Braz's name, he's been told, is "stutters." It's a cruel thing to call a 7-Force, new-fledged demon, but he *is* a demon . . . and he still stutters, unless he takes care to control it, whatever his host. He was assigned to the location as a deep-cover agent, to prepare the way for a Role-creation base of operations. With Braz possessing employees of City Hall, all birth and death records should be accessible, and paperwork slipped through with the right notarizations and signatures.

Recently he began hearing Symphonic disturbances. Given that the noises are coming from all *over* the station, he's convinced that it's a Domination of Lightning, probably based in the police department's Dispatching center. Worse, he's curious about what it's like to possess objects. He's already gifted with the Shedite of the Game attunement, and has been tasked to "keep it quiet" – he hasn't yet tried to corrupt *any* of his hosts, since he fledged. He's interested in object-possession from a perfectly self-ish point of view, but it's a chink in his demonic armor.



Alexandra Domokos, Chief of Police

Chief Domokos – a natural 6-Force human – has been in the police force long enough to remember when there were newspaper cartoons of squad cars with frilly curtains, in protest of women officers. She suffered hazing, harassment, and general hostility for many years, and she is proud of her hard-won rank. She's also notoriously unsympathetic to the "whining" of other female cops – if she put up with it, then so should they. They need to make their own way in the world, not complain about hazing, harassment, or other problems.

In her private life, she's unmarried, atheist, and dotes upon her twin nieces, who live two cities away. She'd sooner believe in elves, aliens, genetically-engineered sentient cats, or the Illuminati than believe in Heaven or Hell. Enanlah doesn't know this, and would love to recruit her as a Soldier.



FETISH FOOTWEAR

The woman measured the seated man's feet carefully, making notes on the pad beside her. She muttered, "All right, you want black boots, thigh-high, four-inch heel, laced up the side. . . what color lacing?"

Fetish Footwear is an establishment that wants only the *best* for the feet of its customers. The owner, Damaris Sence, gave it that name after observing the interest that a particular subset of the market took in their shoes and boots. While it doesn't cater *exclusively* to the sex fetish market, a lot of the customers come from there.

The shop's primary attraction is that Damaris produces custom-made shoes, boots, sandals, whatever is wanted. She sells the usual stock of footwear, but it's her personal services that are the real interest to her market. She doesn't sell herself – or leatherwear for other parts of the body – despite the odd inquiry. She just happens to *love* leather, and has since childhood. She managed to find a handicrafts course at university that gave her training in shoemaking, and has been practicing it ever since. To her, the fetishwear market not only provides her daily bread and butter, it gives her a real chance to be artistic.

The shoe shop itself is on the edge of the seedy part of town, and has a discreet sign above the door. The display in the window has some of Damaris' most elegant work in it, to attract customers, and a card in the edge of the window states, "Personal Work Done To Order." A bell on the door rings as people enter. Inside the shop, there is a central stand which holds custom-made work (behind glass panes) and a display of more ordinary shoes and boots around the walls. Heavy smells of leather and polish hangs in the air, with fainter traces of vinyl and oil. There are a couple of curtained changing rooms to the rear of the shop, in case customers want to check shoes



with a complete but non-public outfit, and a bench for more public fittings. Damaris herself has a desk in the far corner, where the cash register is. On the very rare occasions when there's nobody in the shop, she works on some custom footwear.

It took a while for Damaris to be accepted by her chosen market, but eventually the quality of her work made her friends. She charges a reasonable price for her work, not too low, but not painfully high. Due to her market, she's aware of what's going on in the S&M subculture in the area – people do *talk* while she's fitting their shoes. She hasn't chosen to become involved in it herself, a decision which is respected by her customers.

Her dedication to her job – and the area that it's in – has drawn attention from a local Lilim of Lust and a Malakite of Creation. The Lilim, Corinth, sees Damaris as a *wonderful* natural resource that just needs some exploitation. If she can't manage to lure her in herself, she'll ask for some help from demonic friends. The Malakite, Hector, admires her enthusiasm for the act of creation, and wants her to spread this passion for creation among her friends. So far, neither has done more than visit her shop a few times.

Damaris Sence, Shoemaker

Damaris is a normal woman in her early 30s, with short brown hair, medium height, and a snub nose. She doesn't try to dress as exotically as her market, but just wears jeans, shirts, and patchwork vests. She sincerely *enjoys* her work, and makes enough out of it to live comfortably, if not expensively. Her personal manner is polite and helpful, if somewhat reserved. While she doesn't know about the War, she would find it easy enough to believe in, and is likely to sympathize with any viewpoint about it that stresses dedication and craftsmanship.

FIRE STATION

*The tall man loitered outside the fire station – or at least tried to loiter, though his bearing was too military and his back too stiff for it to be very convincing. His gaze took in the banner, the leaflets advertising **Faith For Firemen**, the evidence of devotion. Yes, he thought to himself, **This is the right place . . .***

The fire station is an old building in brick with a tiled roof, dating back to the 1920s. It is the headquarters for the local firemen, and is where their fire engines are kept and cared for. It has a wide arch opening onto the street for the fire trucks to pass through.

The fire station is, naturally, open 24 hours a day. It is manned in alternate 12-hour shifts – there are two shifts, and firemen are regularly rotated between them so that they are not on day or night shift for too long a period. Each shift is commanded by a lieutenant, both of whom answer to the station captain. The current captain is Alan Navens, who has held the position for 20 years.

The building is three stories high – the ground floor is itself two stories, to give room for the fire trucks and equipment. A flight of metal stairs leads to the upper floor, which holds the radio room, showers, bunks and kitchen. The radio room is glass-fronted, and is manned 24 hours a day, taking all emergency calls. The bunks are for injured firemen, or firemen exhausted after being out on a call, and the kitchen is used to prepare meals during the work shifts. There is also a pole for the firemen to slide down to reach the fire engines on the ground floor.

The routine in case of an emergency is practiced and smooth. The alarm comes in through the radio room (and is simultaneously routed to the local police.) The firemen, wherever they are in the station, pull on their helmets and gear, and head for the fire truck, which leaves for the scene of the fire at top speed. A skeleton staff remains on duty in the station, taking further calls and staying in radio contact with the fire truck, in case of further information or new emergencies. Once the fire is dealt with, any seriously injured firemen are taken to the hospital, and the others return to the station to clean up and rest, and to put the equipment back in order.

The firemen spend a good deal of their daily routine in cleaning and checking the equipment and fire trucks. They also practice using the equipment, and go through daily drills in movement patterns and routines. These days, with the new "Faith For Firemen" program, they're also working on plans to evangelize other fire stations elsewhere. They make regular visits to schools and other areas, to give lectures on fire safety.



The firemen are generally devoted to their job. For most of them, it was a childhood ambition. They also include a large number of born-again evangelical Christians, due to the recent presence of a Servitor of Gabriel among them. These enthusiasts are working on a "Faith For Firemen" program, which they hope to spread to other fire stations. The other firemen are less enthusiastic about it, but are prepared to tolerate their friends' zeal.

Unfortunately for her program, Phelias, the Mercurian of Fire who inspired it, has just "died" while on the job, caught in the middle of a burning house. While she's out of Trauma in Heaven now, she hasn't yet managed to get hold of a new vessel. She's spending her time planning how to get back into the group of firemen and work on inspiring their faith and dedication – after all, her previous identity, Susan Carters, is now *dead*.

What Phelias doesn't realize is that she was deliberately murdered by one of the firemen. This man, Louie Jones, was unfortunately tipped over the edge of psychosis by her efforts at fuelling faith. Growing obsessive on the subject of God and Heaven, he decided that Phelias was too *good* for Earth, and arranged a glorious death for her. If he'd known she was an angel – which he'd have believed – he'd have thought it even more appropriate. After all, angels don't belong on Earth, they belong in Heaven, and they must be sent back there to praise God.

Aceris, a local Seraph of the Sword, has noticed this sudden rise in faith, and intends to use it. Surely such devoted and pious people are perfectly suited to the life of Soldiers of God. He's currently planning how to make his approach, but doesn't see it as being that hard a task. He has started attending the church services that they go to in order to try and spot potential recruits. If he should encounter Phelias, he would expect her to cooperate with him. Phelias, for her part, would be disgusted. She was trying to encourage faith and passion for its own sake, not to produce convenient Soldiers of God. However, she doesn't want to derail her own program . . .

Alan Navens, Captain of the Fire Station

Alan Navens is simply a good man who does a reliable job. He worked his way up through the ranks, and now handles administration thoroughly. He works with the police department to watch for arson cases, and has a lot of information regarding patterns of reported fires in the city. He also knows a great deal about the tactics of arsonists, and their mental states – he's had to help in tracking a few before now. While he doesn't know about the War, and isn't interested in Faith For Firemen, he's nobody's fool and *will* notice strange occurrences.

Phelias, Mercurian of Fire, Faith For Firemen Organizer

Phelias *used* to look like an attractive young black woman with buzz-cut hair and stylish earrings (when off duty.) Of course, that vessel's destroyed now. She believes that passion and faith are vital parts of every life, and saw her mission as a way of encouraging them. Phelias talks quickly – almost too quickly – and with frequent gestures. While she holds strong opinions, it's very hard to make her actually lose her temper over them.

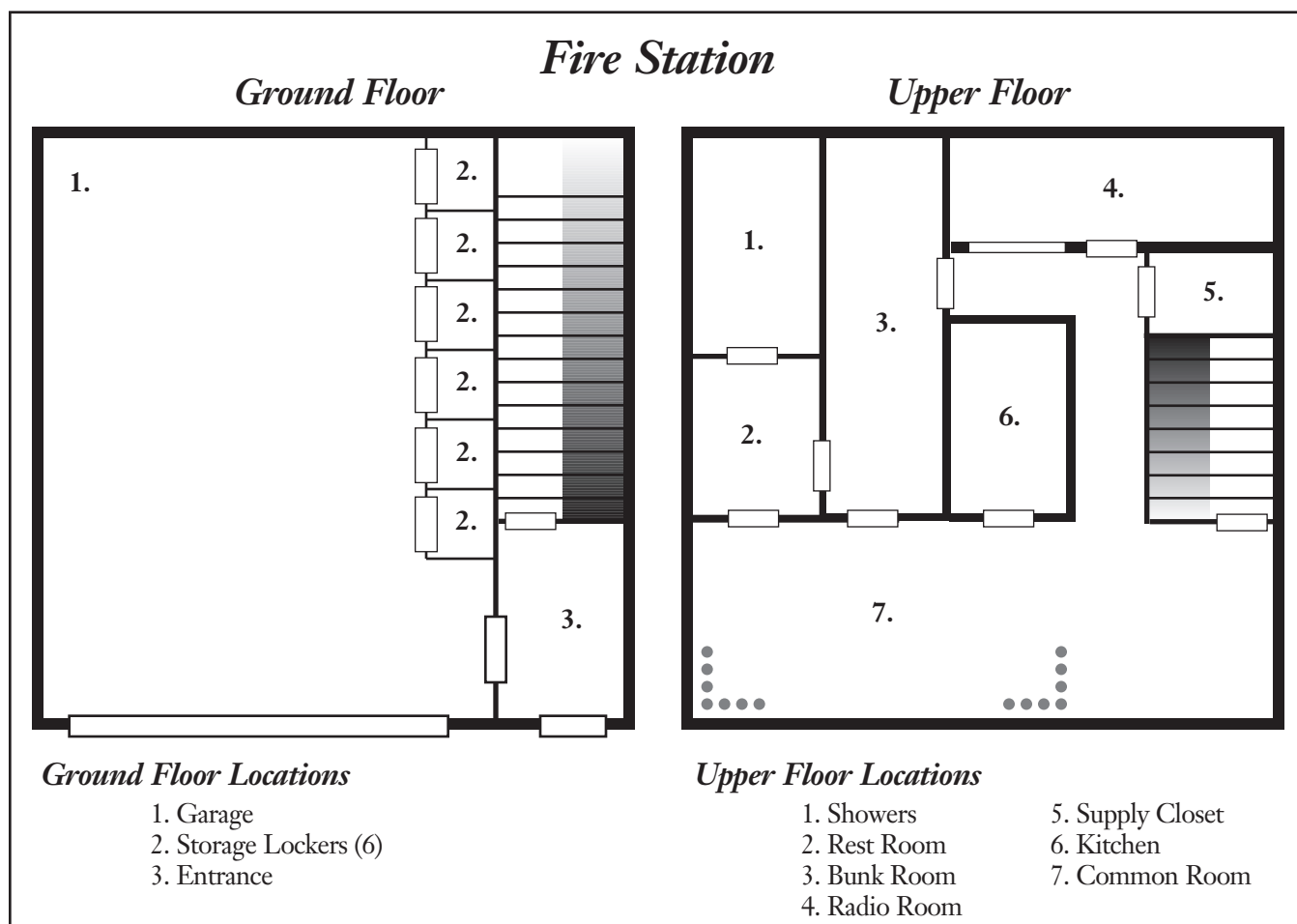
Aceris, Seraph of the Sword, Would-Be Recruiter

Aceris is vigorous, young, ambitious, and thick-skinned. His vessel is tall and stiff-backed, with a long nose and a disarming air of sincerity. His Role as Stephan Viers, a church publicist, is vague enough not to need much maintenance – which is fortunate, for he has little concern for “earthly matters.” He sees this as

the perfect opportunity to assemble a private squad of Soldiers of God with which to pursue Laurence's aims on Earth. While he is sincere in his allegiance to Heaven, he believes that the ends justify the means, and will ride roughshod over humans and other angels in order to reach his perceived ends.

Louie Jones, Psychotic Murderer

Louie Jones is tall, with dark hair, clear gray eyes, large hands, and a gentle smile. He is irretrievably mad, believing absolutely that good people must join God in Heaven. (This would, naturally, include angels – and he believes in angels.) A long-serving fireman, he only recently tipped over the edge while working in the Faith For Firemen program. Very few people *are* good in his mind, however. Should he see someone acting in a consistently ethical, faithful, and virtuous manner, he'll spend a while watching them to be totally certain. He'll then arrange a tragic accident to send them to their eternal reward. He knows all about setting fires . . .



FORGE COVEN

*They were sitting in the kitchen afterward, drinking coffee, when the broad-shouldered man turned to the others. "We've been dodging the issue. If we **can** do something, doesn't that mean that we **should** do something?"*

The woman sitting next to him frowned vaguely. "You have a point. But are they asking us to do something?"

A Wiccan coven meets regularly in the back garden of one of its members. It consists of 13 people, all ethical, and all holding to the Wiccan tenets: "An it harm none, do as you will," and the law of threefold retribution (that all actions give rise to a threefold return, for good or evil.) The group has named itself the "Forge Coven," due to the fact that the High Priest is a local jeweller, and has made silver pentacles for all the members to wear.

The coven is in the traditional style with a High Priestess (Tara Lennis, "Morwen") and High Priest (Joseph Rickson, "Arthur"), worshipping the Mother Goddess and the Horned God. They meet twice a month, at full moon and at new moon, and at eight "Sabbats" a year, on traditional dates; these are January 31 (called Oimelec, Brigit, or February Eve), March 21

(Ostara or Spring Equinox), April 30 (Beltane or May Eve), June 22 (Midsummer, Litha or Summer Solstice), July 31 (Lunasa or Lammas), September 21 (Harvest, Mabon or Autumn Equinox), October 31 (Samhain, Sowyn or Hallows), and December 21 (Yule or Winter Solstice.)

The Forge Coven is of comparatively recent formation, and has only just finished a full year of worship. While none of them are active sorcerers, they are all firm in their principles and in their adherence to their Wiccan beliefs. They don't proselytize – it would be against their principles – and most of them make no formal declaration of their beliefs, fearing public opinion. They do all wear the silver pentacles which Joseph Rickson has made for them.

The meeting place for the coven is in Joseph's back garden, between a pair of apple trees and shielded from general view. The altar has been hand-built from the earth of the garden, and is in the form of a long low table. When not being used, it is left uncovered to the air (and the ritual implements are kept in the garden shed, in a silk-lined wooden box). When it is being used for a service, the ritual implements are placed on it. These include an *athame* (a ritual knife) and a cup (both forged by Joseph), bowls of water and salt, a censer of incense, and pure wax candles in various colors.

The coven has chosen to worship skyclad (naked) in summer, but wear dark blue cotton robes in winter. Services begin with a ritual invocation of the Goddess and God by a number of different mythical names, and the sealing of a formal circle around the altar. There is a session of praise and the invocation of the Goddess and God within the High Priestess and High Priest, and within all celebrants. The circle is then broken, and the powers ritually thanked. While Joseph and Tara customarily lead the services, any of the coven could do it if necessary.

All of the coven hold perfectly normal jobs – Joseph is a jeweller, Tara is a lecturer in history, and the others are bankers, librarians, police officers . . . A couple of trusted friends of each know their religious affiliations, but generally they keep them private, to escape public prejudice that might regard Wiccans as "Satanists."

The intensity of the coven's belief has begun to attract some ethereal attention. While their meeting-place isn't actively consecrated or empowered, several Primal Spirits (*The Marches*, p. 105) have started drifting through the dreams of the coven. They would *love* the chance to create Soul Links (*The Marches*, p. 126) with them, as a tie to the mortal world. The coven would generally find this acceptable, seeing it as a manifestation of the natural power in all things. (Or at least, that's how the Ethereals would describe it . . .)





The coven members regularly discuss what they should be doing as a group – after all, it is naturally ethical to help other people. However, some aspects of Wiccan belief consider help an infringement on free will if it is not asked for, which has caused discussion. This has begun to move toward a consensus that they should start being active in the neighborhood. June Grace, one of the coven, favors some sort of neighborhood watch scheme to deal with local crime. Joseph is wondering if they could start watching the neighborhood for supernatural interference, acting as some sort of “occult cops.” After all, there are other local mystical organizations, who aren’t all as ethically minded as the coven is. The coven has general suspicions about who a number of them are, due to prior acquaintance, meetings in occult bookshops, and so on. Should any of the coven actually make a bargain with the Ethereals, and gain genuine powers, this will become a *strong* priority . . .

None of the coven knows about the War, and, so far, no angels or demons know about the coven. Should demons discover it, they would either try to corrupt it, or (more subtly) to *use* it. It would make a splendid *cause celebre* to trick angels into attacking this “harmless group of people” . . . The opinions of angels on the coven would vary from outright disapproval (for angels who promote Catholicism) to definite approval (from angels who respect their sense of ethics and cooperation.) The opinion of the *coven* on angels and demons will depend on the circumstances under which they encounter them, and will be slanted through their Wiccan perspective. If demons should appear as freethinking natural forces (and not openly evil), and angels be portrayed as repressive Inquisition types, then the coven is far more likely to ally with demons . . . at least until they start noticing discrepancies.

Joseph Rickson, High Priest

Joseph has a busy “day job” as a jeweller, and a lot of his business is reworking broken jewelry or resetting old stones. He is a expert professional silversmith, though he does little actual original work. Joseph is in his early 30s, broad-shouldered, with floppy brown hair, and rough-skinned hands seamed with old burns. He is extremely polite when at work, but relaxes with friends and uses a lot of profanity. He feels strongly that people with the ability to affect the world around them have an obligation to do so, for the benefit of all.

Tara Lennis, High Priestess

Tara is an elegant woman of African descent in her mid-30s, who wears her hair in an complicated structure of braids. She lectures in history at the local university, specializing in the slave trade and its repercussions. Her parents were also Wiccans, and she grew up in the tradition. She is fond of classical music, and always plays it in her car when driving anywhere, or in her study when not with students. Tara holds the ultimate vote or veto in any of the coven’s discussions, as High Priestess and because of her experience, although she rarely has to use it.

June Grace, Coven Member

June works at the local police station as a dispatcher, taking reports as they come in and passing them on to police cars in the field. She’s in her mid-40s, with short graying hair and a capable manner. She’s also a borderline alcoholic, though she knows her weakness and keeps it strictly under control. June does *not* support “playing at vigilantes,” though she does accept that the coven might have more information about local occult goings-on than the police. She favors a Neighborhood Watch type of scheme, staying within the law.

THE GRAVEYARD

Night air blew through the graveyard, carrying with it the scent of rum and smoke. The sound of hands clapping echoed faster and faster, like knocking on a door.

On the edge of town is the Church of Saint Catherine, an old Roman Catholic building which has been standing for nearly 150 years. Built by the hands of the faithful – though not on any native holy ground – it stands in weathered gray stone, a monument to belief. Inside, the light falls through the stained glass windows onto old wooden pews and the tiled floor of the nave. The air is quiet, the place is holy, and the entire church is dedicated to the worship of God.

Outside, there is a graveyard. Between a rise in the local popularity of cremation and the fact that it is almost full, it goes largely unused. The stones and carved angels are weathered and often broken, and weeds are scattered through the grass. Some fresh flowers rest before headstones, but most of the graves are untended and clearly forgotten. Occasionally some church volunteers cut the long grass and clear away the worst of the weeds, lending a temporary neatness to the area – before its inevitable lapse back to neglect.

At least, that's the graveyard by day. By night, more sinister influences enter it, and work in the shadow of the church. Two forces battle for control of the graveyard; a group of local practitioners of Voudoun, and several demons of Saminga, who see it as a convenient source of corpses. So far the war has not yet grown overt, as the Voudounistas have yet to definitely identify the demons, and the demons don't want to attract public attention to themselves by killing the Voudounistas. This isn't likely to last long, as Phasark – the Shedite of Saminga leading the demons – has only a limited amount of patience.

The local priest, Father Paul Eddison, is unaware of the nature of the forces that clash outside the church by night. He is beginning to suspect that *someone* is out there, however – the odd chalk markings on stones, the occasional scatter of feathers, or brown smear of blood, the smell of rum and smoke . . . He has spoken to a number of his parishioners, but either they know nothing, or they are practicing Voudounistas as well as good Catholics, and keep silence. He is growing more and more worried. On several occasions he has tried walking through the churchyard by night, but on those visits there have been no unusual noises or occurrences. This has led him to suspect that he's being watched. (He is. The Voudounistas respect him and don't want him to discover their actions, knowing that he'd be offended, and the demons don't want to have to meddle with a possible representative of Heaven – yet.)

Leon Carson, the local *boungan* (priest and leader to the Voudounistas) has his private *bounfor* in the shed at the back of his yard. However, this is too small to hold more than a dozen worshippers. He lives half a mile from the church, in a quiet part of town, where he is well-respected by his neighbors (who know his priesthood and rank.) The graveyard is a much more convenient place for ceremonies – the fact that it is consecrated to Christian use in no way conflicts with Voudoun beliefs, which include Christianity. Leon started to hold ceremonies there six years ago. It's only recently that Father Eddison has begun to notice anything odd going on. He doesn't want any open confrontation with Father Eddison, whom he respects. There are about 50 local Voudounistas, mostly in family groupings, 20 of whom are devoted enough to their faith to be ready to fight for it.



Phasark is a much more recent arrival on the scene. He came to the area in one of his favorite hosts, a middle-aged dyed blonde by the name of Rosalind Mather. Rosalind murdered her husband after Phasark taught her about digitalis and simulated heart attacks, and is now looking for a new and wealthier spouse. The police, at the moment, have no suspicions of her. There are a couple of other demons with Phasark – all of them are relatively low in power and have no territory of their own. They see the graveyard as ideal ground for them to lair in, and possibly some day to nurture a Tether to Death. (Of course, this belief is entirely supposition, as the formation of Tethers is ineffable – the faith of the local people in the Church might just as well create a Tether to the Sword.)

Phasark is intelligent enough to realize that exposing the Voudounistas to the public would not, ultimately, help him. The attention drawn to the church would make it a great deal harder for him to get control of the graveyard, and would probably bring investigating angels.

The graveyard itself is several hundred square yards of ground, stretching out behind the church and facing away from the town. One old cupola tomb toward the rear of the graveyard represents the *poteau-mitan* of the Voudounistas. This is the center of the *bounfor* area for their ceremonies (their temple), and represents the *loa* Damballah, the Divine Snake of the Voudoun ritual and a protector of mankind. There is nothing to make this obvious to people investigating, as the ritual *vevers*, symbols of the *loas*, are wiped away after each ceremony. However, close investigation might notice some remnants of chalk, flour, and blood . . .



The Voudoun ceremonies take place once a week, on Saturday nights. The Voudounista congregation gathers outside the churchyard, while Leon enters and marks the *vevers* around the *poteau-mitan*. They then follow him in and begin their ceremony. This includes ritual chants to the *loas*, possessions of the congregation (being “ridden” by the *loas*), sprinkling of flour and alcohol, and occasionally the sacrifice of poultry. (Leon takes care to buy live poultry for the ceremonies out of town, so as not to attract attention.) Most of the practitioners live near the graveyard; other nearby residents are too frightened to investigate, or choose to mind their own business. The place itself has no intrinsic power or abilities, but is merely a suitable location for the services.

The demons have, so far, been trying to “spook” the Voudounistas away, by causing random accidents and trouble. This is not working – it has, in fact, caused Leon to start actively looking for people causing trouble. For the moment, he suspects local youths, or possibly racists or fundamentalists. He’s had problems from all of them before. He would like to solve the problem *peaceably*, if possible, and definitely without alerting Father Eddison, much less the police. Several of the younger Voudounistas, both male and female, are more aggressive than he is, and are likely to assault people that they believe responsible, or at least handle them roughly. They will, however, respect his authority in the final analysis.

Phasark has seen that matters are going more slowly than he’d expected. (He’d thought that worshippers of Ethereals would be “a cowardly, superstitious lot” and easy to frighten away.) Now that the Voudounistas are proving obdurate, he’s considering moving up to the next stage of violence. If he could cause some internecine quarrels among the group, he might be able to split them up and reduce their effectiveness. He’s already tried to possess Leon, and failed. (Leon is a Pagan Soldier, though Phasark doesn’t know this, and has a surprisingly high Will.)

Father Eddison is simply disturbed by the whole thing. His attempts at nightly exploration haven’t revealed anything, the parishioners won’t admit to noticing or knowing anything, and he’s at a loss as to what to do next. His small house is around by the front of the church, the other side from the graveyard. He has a housekeeper that comes every day to clean and cook for him, but he lives there alone. He is considering writing to someone higher in the Church for advice . . .

Father Paul Eddison

Father Eddison has been caring for his congregation for 30 years now. He’s aware that some of them have links to Voudoun, but he sincerely prays that none of them would be so misguided as to practice it as a second religion. He knows very little about it, and what he knows isn’t good. (And, of course, none of the local Voudounistas are going to broach the subject to him.) He is a kind and gentle man, with a sincere faith and charitable nature, and hates to believe the worst of anyone. Though he doesn’t know about the War, he would be able to fit it into his worldview very easily. One of the bishops who he writes to regularly is a Soldier of Laurence, and would definitely want the situation here looked into. Father Eddison suffers from arthritis in his knees and hips, making his movements slow, painful, and noisy – sneaking around graveyards at night is not his strong point.

Leon Carson, Pagan Soldier

Leon is actually a Pagan Soldier, with 6 Forces. He is aware of the War, having been warned by his *loas* to avoid both angels and demons if possible. He has not yet realized that he is facing demons, and will be very worried when he does. Should angels make themselves known to him at that point, he will actively work with them to dispose of demons, as the *loas* have an uneasy truce with Heaven (*The Marches*, p. 104.) However, if he doesn't realize that he is facing demons, he will avoid angelic attention, and will warn the other Voudounistas not to speak with any angelic vessels that he identifies. Leon is an entirely ordinary-looking black man in his late 50s, with grizzled hair and a tendency to stoop, and a daytime job as a greengrocer. He has a gentle voice, and surprisingly small hands. His patron *loa* is Legba, the Opener of the Ways and the guardian of gates and crossroads, who acts as the interpreter of the gods. Legba is identified with Saint Antony, and there are several statues of Saint Antony in Leon's home.



Phasark, Shedite of Death

Phasark is an embittered Shedite who has spent the last 300 years being thrown out of the territory of other demons. He hasn't got many Forces to show for his age, as he's never managed to do anything major enough to attract the attention of his Prince. He has, however, managed to collect several friends, who are with him now in the hope of establishing the graveyard as a base. Phasark has absolutely no gift for getting on with other people, or even persuading them, and is very bad at corrupting victims other than by simply overriding their Will. Fortunately for him, he has a high Will and usually succeeds in dominating them. His position in fights against angels has usually been as cannon-fodder on the front lines – this has scared him enough that he will avoid open battles, and try to divert inquisitive angels toward the Voudounistas.

GREEN FIELDS KINDERGARTEN

"How sweet," said the Seraph sentimentally. "The happy laughter of innocent children." He paused. "Yes, this is my first time on Earth – why do you ask?"

Green Fields Kindergarten is a happy place, filled with children enjoying themselves. It's next to a park, the teachers are motivated and enthusiastic, and the grounds and classrooms, although getting old, are still in good repair. Parents bring their children in the morning and collect the hyperactive little sweethearts in the afternoon, and the teachers give a sigh of relief as the last sugar-crazed child runs off screaming. (They may be good and ethical teachers, but they're still human.)

Many visitors to the school comment on the excellent morale of the staff and the cheerfulness of the Principal, Jenni Saunders. This is largely rooted on the work of Jenni's secretary, Michelle Hoskins – a Soldier of Dreams. Michelle is aware of everything that goes on around the school, as she keeps Jenni's schedule and is present at staff meetings to take notes. Using the Song of Dreams, she's able to smooth the sleep of the other members of staff and keep them good-humored and enthusiastic. Jenni Saunders, while a trained teacher and a good manager, is a normal woman.

The kindergarten itself has a strip of concrete playground set around the buildings. Several climbing toys and sandboxes are put in the concrete area, for the children to play during break. There are always a couple of teachers watching them at these times. The kindergarten buildings include a small gymnasium, an assembly hall with a couple of pianos, a library, offices for the teachers, a closet for the janitor's gear, and classrooms. The janitor is the first to arrive at the kindergarten, at seven a.m., and opens up the buildings for the teachers who arrive shortly afterward. The children are present either from eight a.m. till noon, or from noon till four p.m., and the teachers stay for a couple of hours after that to take care of meetings, courses, and so forth. By seven p.m. the kindergarten is closed and dark.

What nobody in the area knows is that, in the 1930s, the site of the kindergarten was the secret meeting-point for a group of sorcerers. This group, the Hand of the Invisible, had its main altar and pentacle directly underneath where the kindergarten playground now is. The sorcerers were wiped out by a group of angels of the Wind who were passing through town, and the affair was reported as a gas main explosion. (Well, a gas main *did* explode . . . along with everything else.) The nephew of one of those sorcerers, Richard Pettifrew, has found his uncle's notes and repeated his uncle's compact with Hell. He is now considering how to use the powers which he believes are still latent in the pentacle . . .

*Michelle Hoskins,
Soldier of Dreams, Secretary*

Michelle has been working for Dreams since she was a student in her 20s. She is very happy in her job, seeing the results of her work around her every day. Her hair is pinned back, her manner is brisk, and she appears to be the archetypal stern secretary, keeping children firmly in order. She'll be embarrassed if she has to ask for help, even from angels, as she'll see it as having failed to some degree.

Richard Pettifrew, Sorcerer

Richard is a gangly computer systems consultant in his mid-30s, who views sorcery as just another skill which can be mastered. He's reading through his uncle's notes very carefully, and has some concept of both sides in the War. He plans to do some experiments soon, attempts at minor bindings or summonings. He'll save any full-scale attempts over the old pentacle until he's certain of what he's doing, but for the moment he's regularly watching the playground – and all those little sacrificial victims . . .

THE KIWI FRUIT GREENHOUSE

In the cheerful house, a pleasant elderly man and woman sat over their supper. When the meal was over, the man leaned back in his chair, and lit a joint. The smoke curled upward, and his wife smiled happily.

This greenhouse, in a field behind its owners' farmhouse, provides kiwi fruit to most of the health food shops in the vicinity. The kiwi fruit produced are ripe and plump, juicy and delicious. They're well known throughout the region.

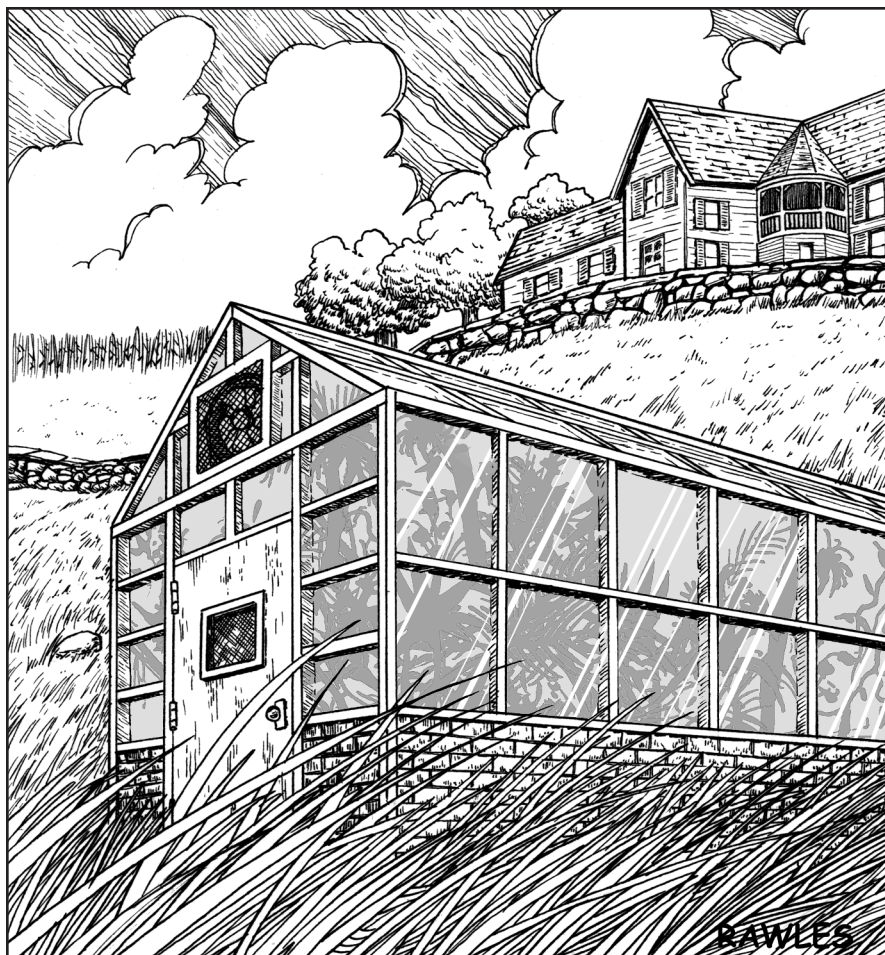
What isn't well-known is that the Trevisions, who grow the fruit, also nurture a healthy cannabis crop in the same greenhouses. James Trevison started growing it for his arthritis (he's in his 60s) a few years ago, but shared it with some of his friends from the health food stores. He now has quite a large clientele – all of whom state that they need it for medical or religious purposes.

Noph, a Djinn of Fleurity (the Demon Prince of Drugs, *Night Music*, p. 26) has noticed the new influx of cannabis in the neighborhood. He is currently trying to track it to its source. However, most of the people using James' cannabis are friends of his, and have

been asked by him not to spread the word about it. Noph is therefore hitting a number of dead ends – all that he knows for *certain* is that a number of his previous regular users aren't buying from him any more.

James, for his part, definitely does not want to get into the regular drug business. He's managed to reconcile himself with the idea that he's providing drugs for *friends*. If the demand for his cannabis grows, he's likely to try and shut the *entire* outfit down, and go back to only growing it for himself again.

The Trevison house is on the outskirts of town, and has a field behind it, with the kiwi fruit greenhouse at the end of the field. The greenhouse has all modern conveniences, including technological heating, watering, and so on. The cannabis itself is grown at a section at the end, camouflaged by several of the kiwi plants. Nobody from the police has ever suspected James of supplying the drug, or thought to investigate the place – though some of his old friends are glad to see that his arthritis is improving.



James Trevison

James lives quietly with his wife Linda. They're both retired (previously he was a teacher and she was a nurse) and had the kiwi fruit business as a hobby. It was Linda who found an article in one of her medical journals about cannabis helping ease the pain of arthritis sufferers. She managed to get hold of a packet of seeds via mail order from Amsterdam, and they were both delighted when it worked. Now the whole thing has got rather out of hand, and James is guiltily wondering if he should stop it altogether.

James is a good man, kind-hearted and straightforward, and was an excellent teacher. If he stops taking cannabis, he's going to have to go back to a heavy drug prescription. He honestly doesn't want to become a drug supplier generally. He is Catholic, as is his wife, and actually *believes* in angels – and demons – though he's ignorant of the War.

Noph, Djinn of Drugs

Noph (known as Norton Derling) is a dogged Djinn who's only just become aware that somebody else in town is supplying cannabis. He's a straightforward and practical type – when he finds out who they are, they can either shut up shop, or they can deal through him. He'll call in some Soldiers of Hell to provide muscular backup if necessary. In person, he's a large man, but flabby, with glazed eyes and receding hair, and puncture tracks up his arms. He uses his own products, and has an unreliable temper in consequence.

MIRCHENKO'S

The young man tried not to look uncomfortable as he sipped from his glass of water. No alcohol, no appetizers . . . what kind of a restaurant was this, anyhow? He appreciated his supervisor's gesture in inviting him here – clearly it meant that he was on the fast track to management. But he'd expected that the older man would at least eat at decent restaurants.

Wait. He tasted the food. It was surprisingly good. Maybe the old guy has some taste after all . . .

Mirchenko's is a very select restaurant in the better part of town. It isn't that it actively turns people away at the door, but only the *right* sort of people seem to find their way there. Usually, new visitors are invited by older clients. It is an excellent restaurant for business lunches.

There is no sign above the door; an anonymous curtained bay window looks out on the street. Once through the door, a bland young woman in a black suit sits at a desk, taking the names of visitors and asking whether they have reservations. She also states firmly that absolutely *no* smoking is allowed inside the restaurant. This rule is cast-iron. If anybody lights up once inside the restaurant, they will be politely shown the door by the waiters.

The restaurant itself is through another door past the young woman. It is a spacious room decorated elegantly in dark wood, with the occasional rug on the polished floor making a patch of color. The three waiters are all discreet and quiet. A small bookcase stands over by the wall, containing a set of leather-bound menus – the ones on the bottom shelf are different from the rest, bound in black leather rather than dark brown. If anybody checks them, the menus on the bottom shelf contain a wider selection of dishes than the others, and a list of dates. People asking the waiters about the different menus will be told that they belong to the private dining club which meets once a month.



*Mirchenko's
American and
Bulgarian cuisine
at its finest.*

*Reservations Required
226-4225*

*The Friday Club:
a private
gathering for
exotic, lively
dishes.*

Diners may be shocked to find that the only drink available is water – and not even fizzy or mineral water, but plain spring water. The menu provides a relatively small list of dishes, too, and there are *no* condiments on the tables. Anybody asking for tomato ketchup will be regarded with shock by other diners.

The consolation comes in the food itself. The cooking is absolutely excellent, and the lack of any artificial influences on the flavor (such as salt, pepper, wine, or cigarette smoke) means that gourmets can truly appreciate it. Mirchenko's is a paradise for gourmets, who bring friends and family to the place only if they feel that they will truly appreciate it.

Mirchenko's private dining club, which meets once a month on Fridays, is less innocent. This club, an elite subset of the usual guests, enjoys a meal of human flesh, prepared and cooked with all the usual care given to Mirchenko's cuisine. Entry to the club is by invitation only, and requires the agreement of *all* current members. There are currently 15 people involved, besides the chef and Mirchenko himself.

The chef, Stefan Trobovich, is quite aware of what he is cooking. His two kitchen assistants have long since had their wills broken, and obey without questions. All three waiters are aware of the nature of the place, and are paid well enough that it doesn't trouble their consciences.

The chef's domain is the entire kitchen and the attached walk-in freezers, and any diners attempting to enter will be brusquely asked to leave. The waiters will back this request up with force, if necessary. Human flesh is stored in one of the walk-in freezers, behind a false back, and is only brought to the restaurant the day before the club's private dinner, so as to avoid risk.

On the night of a club dinner, only club members are admitted, and anybody else is turned away at the door. At 10 p.m. the doors are locked, and the food is served – as ever, with no condiments, and only pure water to drink. The meal concludes by midnight, and the club members leave for their homes, like any well-fed businessmen.

Much as angels or demons might wish to discover otherwise, this enterprise is entirely originated and run by humans. Mirchenko and Trobovich came up with the idea together, knowing that there would be others in society with a similarly *discriminating* palate to appreciate the services that they offered. They were war comrades together in Bulgaria, and discovered a common taste for human flesh. Mirchenko came to America 20 years ago and began to establish his restaurant. When Trobovich joined him ten years later, they were able to fully expand into the gourmet end of the "dining experience."

Mirchenko takes great care to make sure that the human flesh he obtains is of good quality. He has a second identity as a helper at a local organization for the homeless, where he works once or twice a week for a few hours. This allows him to note possible victims who are currently free from drugs or disease. He builds up a casual relationship with such people – enough so that he can later lure them into a side-alley and render them unconscious. He then removes them to his house on the outskirts of town to be killed, bled, and jointed. The meat is shipped to the restaurant in a refrigerated van.

There are many humans in the city who appreciate the good food that Mirchenko's offers to the general public, and they can include Soldiers of Heaven or of Hell. Currently – and quite accidentally – Mirchenko's has acquired two Soldiers of Trade and a Soldier of Gluttony as regular patrons. The Soldiers of Trade, Peter Smythe and Gladys Harding, both work for a major banking firm, and were introduced to the restaurant by a friend. The Soldier of Gluttony, Zeke Dunston, is a jewelry importer who was referred to the restaurant by a Russian colleague. His friend told him (with a wink) that it was, "the only place in town where one could get decent food." None of the Soldiers are aware of each other yet, or of the true nature of the restaurant. Peter Smythe is toying with the idea of investing in it.

Georges Mirchenko, Proprietor

Georges Mirchenko is a smiling man in his early 50s, cheeks usually dark with stubble – his hair is still thick and black. He is a cheerful psychopath who often describes himself as "pondering the significance of the Lamb in religion," with large chubby hands and sweet-smelling breath. His manner is brisk and pleasant, but he is totally unattached to humanity, except for those people who share his tastes in cuisine. He feels that such people are his only equals, as they have proven that they can rise above human morality to enjoy perfection in taste. He lies easily, and has a few public health inspectors on his payroll if anybody tries to close down the restaurant on health grounds.

Jules Trobovich, Cook

Jules Trobovich is a far simpler being than Mirchenko; he simply enjoys cooking, and he doesn't care *what* he cooks. If someone presented him with the last of an endangered species, his first thought would be what sauce to use on it. To him, humans are merely another form of meat, and one that allows a true artist to give vent to genius. He happily works for his old friend Mirchenko, and shares in the monthly meals, ruling his kitchen with brutal harshness otherwise.

NELSON'S JUNKYARD

The cries of children sounded through the junkyard, their location uncertain as the echoes reverberated between the piles of rusting cars. The summer air was peaceful and safe. It seemed to be a place that had been taken out of time . . .

Nelson's Junkyard, run by James Nelson (Old Man Nelson) is useful to the local adults and loved by the local children. Adults come there from time to time to look for still-useful items or to dump old belongings, such as furniture, boxes of empty bottles, bags of clothing . . . Children find the place a treasure trove, crawling through the rusting doors of old cars and picking their way through minefields of broken glass and jagged metal. Occasionally a child cuts himself and needs tetanus shots, but most of the time they play with a total unconcern for their safety.

The junkyard itself is on the outskirts of town, in one of the poorer areas. The large gate that faces on the road is tangled with ivy and bindweed, its iron rusting – although the hinges are surprisingly well-oiled, and it can be shut rapidly in case of an emergency. The “walls” of the junkyard are a mixture of iron railings, piled car remnants, and disjointed chunks of brick wall, providing a reasonable barrier against adult entry. (Local children, on the other hand, know all the easy ways in and out.)

The junkyard covers several thousand square yards. There are three main tracks through it, roughly equidistant, large enough to drive a small truck through, for the convenience of people coming to dump stuff. James makes sure that these tracks are left clear, so that people can continue to use them. They join in a large arc at the far end of the junkyard, so a truck can drive out again without having to reverse all the way. The junk itself is piled higgledy-piggledy into a tangled obstacle course. An adult trying to find his way through it in any conditions other than by broad daylight or on the paths will be seriously inconvenienced, and possibly injured.

By the gate of the junkyard stands a small house, surprisingly neat and well-kept for its surroundings. James Nelson lives there with his wife Sophie. They're both in their 60s and have been here for the last 15 years. To the local children, they've been there forever. Sophie manages the house and works on what she modestly calls “my little sketches” while James keeps the junkyard in order. Local residents consider them entirely respectable – they even attend church on Sunday and take part in the neighborhood watch scheme.

The local residents would be astonished to find out that the Nelsons have a hidden past. James Nelson (originally John Niles) was a Soldier of Laurence, and Sophie Nelson (originally Selina Devens) was a Soldier of Andrealphus. Both have gone renegade from their

respective sides, burned out by years of fighting and self-abasement. They were in their 40s, and on opposite sides, when they met in a Tether of Lust that John's mistress was attacking and Selina's was defending. In the ensuing fight both angel and demon died, the Prince of Lust was invoked, and the Tether was blown up. Selina hauled John out of the rubble, and John returned the favor by getting her to medical treatment. They found that they were listed as dead in the local newspaper. Feeling betrayed by the beings that they had served, tired of the War, and believing that in the end they made *no* difference, they escaped together. Each found in the other someone who truly understood the difficulties of working for a “greater cause.” It became love.

John had enough experience at covert operations to know how to hide his trail. He and Selina created new lives on the other side of the country, with new names. And if James Nelson does have a well-cared-for sword in an upstairs cupboard, and if Sophie Nelson's artwork is nude studies . . . well, nobody is going to know. They have enough pooled knowledge about celestials and ethereals to have a good chance of recognizing one, and will do their utmost to avoid attention. Both expect death – at the very least – as a punishment for their desertion.

Phosphora, a Shedite of Nightmares, has recently noticed the junkyard, and thinks that it would be the ideal point to create a nexus of local fears. With a bit of work, children can be drawn to fear it as much as they love going there – they'll even go there more often, daring each other to risk it. Phosphora plans to start quietly with a couple of accidents, then move up the scale through threatening loiterers to perhaps rape and murder.

Sophie and James will attempt to protect their property and keep the children safe. It's no coincidence that the junkyard has been arranged to be strategically defensible. If they discover that there is a Shedite at work, James will use one of the Tether-addresses that he still has to call in angelic help anonymously. Should that happen, they will both try to maintain their cover, but will be ready to flee at a moment's notice. They are both high-Willed and have a reasonable chance of resisting Phosphora's possession, and are knowledgeable enough to recognize it if it happens to them.

James Nelson, Junkyard Owner

James Nelson may be white-haired and in his 60s, but he's still perfectly capable of using the sword in his bedroom, or the submachine gun in the attic. As far as he's concerned, he gave most of his life to the cause of Heaven, and what was it worth? Nothing. He was already bitter and tired when the raid on the Tether happened. He couldn't make any difference against some-



thing on the scale of Andrealphus, and nobody even bothered to look for his body afterward. As far as he's concerned, the angels and demons can *have* the War, and he'll stay well out of it. This attitude shows up as a deep-rooted cynicism. He speaks with a Texas drawl, and regularly checks around the junkyard to make sure that the "defenses" are all in place – battle-trained habits die hard.

Sophie Nelson, Devoted Wife

Sophie Nelson has always found it easiest to do what she was told. She obeyed her mistress when she was a Soldier of Lust, and life was comfortable – if slowly more and more debased and desperate. When she pulled James out of the rubble of the Tether, it was one of the few self-motivated things she'd ever done. She went along with his later plan to escape – because it was the easiest thing to do. While she does genuinely love him now, she couldn't care less about the children, and will be more interested in escaping Phosphora or any angels. She's in

her 60s and has her silver hair in a bun, but still has an elegant walk. Her favorite combat tactic is to get close and appear harmless, then stab or scratch an opponent with an envenomed stiletto. She plays the part of a sweet elderly lady, but sometimes overdoes the fluffiness.

Phosphora, Shedite of Nightmares

Phosphora is an average Shedite of Nightmares – vicious, sadistic, and subtle. It has noticed that children fear different things from adults, in different ways. It intends to use the forthcoming work as an opportunity to research the subject. Ideally, Phosphora would like to make the junkyard both utterly feared *and* an object of constant visits by the local children. This will take work, it realizes. If it should perceive who the Nelsons truly are, it will instantly begin to haunt their dreams. Phosphora won't want to hand them over to any celestial authorities – they're so much more *fun* like this . . .

OPPS APPS

The Impudite scanned the computer screen thoughtfully. It looked like just another advertisement for spare collectible card games. It wasn't.

Opps Apps (short for "Opportunities and Applications") isn't a geographical location – it's an Internet site. Run off a server in Finland, it allows people worldwide to post notices about goods they want to sell, and to bid on goods being auctioned off. All arrangements are between buyers and sellers only – while a person has to actually have a login in order to *bid* or to *sell*, there are no confirmatory checks on identity. The only requirement is a valid e-mail address.

The Internet site is well laid out and easy to navigate. A login request takes a full 24 hours to register, but after that the login name and password are sent to the user. The user may then bid on any item currently for sale on the site. Items are marked as being on sale for a limited time; a brief description of the item is enclosed, as is a listing of current bids and the final date by which all bids must be submitted. It's extremely efficient.

Zebediah, the Ofanite of Trade who set the whole project up, is very proud of it. He works as one of the system operators, and uses the computer facilities to communicate with angels across the world via e-mail. He also finds it very interesting to observe selling patterns through watching Opps Apps.

What Zebediah doesn't realize is that his beloved system is being used by Servitors of Theft – and, it must be admitted, a few Servitors of the Wind. The Servitors of Theft find Opps Apps the perfect place to fence stolen goods, and to pass coded messages through the wording of descriptions. If a stolen object is being offered for sale by a Servitor of Theft, he will include certain words in a certain order in the description (though this often

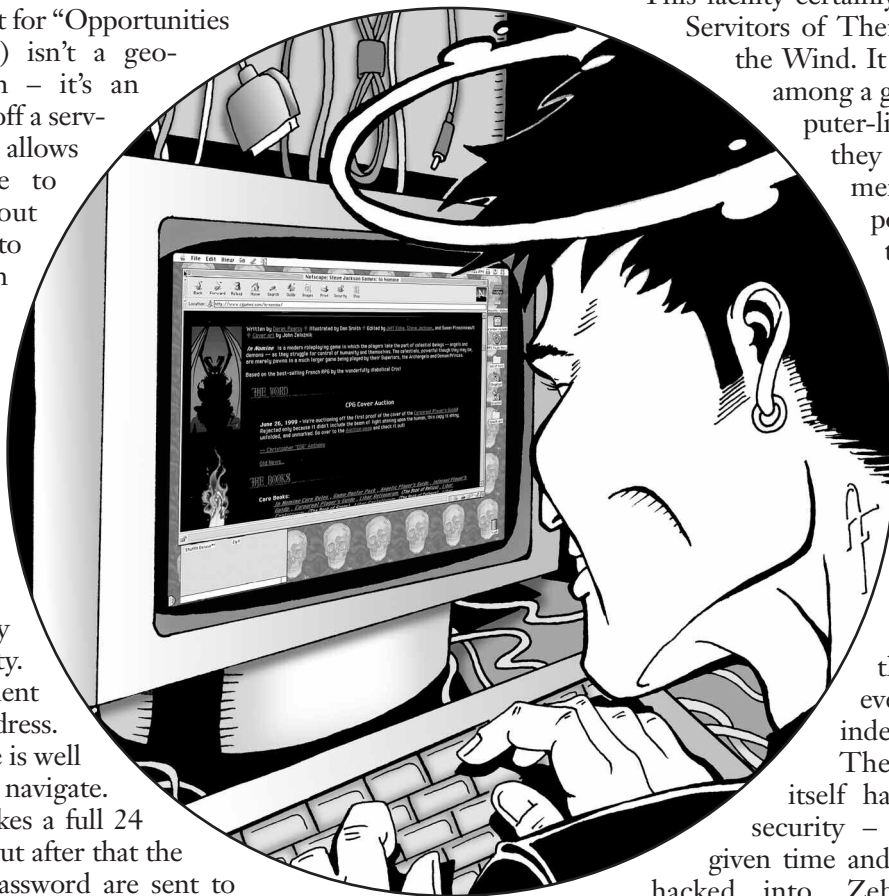
makes it read stiltedly.) Other code words and combinations thereof carry complex meanings, and can be located and decoded by anybody doing a keyword search on the site.

This facility certainly isn't known to all Servitors of Theft, far less those of the Wind. It is open knowledge among a group of more computer-literate Thieves, but they take care who they mention it to. At one point a Servitor of the Wind was masquerading as a Servitor of Theft, and found out about the sale of stolen goods, which he cheerfully passed on to *his* friends. The Servitors of the Wind do *not* know about the message-passing, though they may eventually think of it independently.

The computer server itself has a high level of security – though doubtless, given time and effort, it could be hacked into. Zebediah would be ambivalent if he found out about the Thieves – while they are demons, they *are* mostly engaging in trade. More to the point, it would be very difficult to remove them from the system. Even if he did delete the logins they used, they could create new ones, and find new code words. The most efficient action might be to find the code words that they were using – even if this meant reading through 5,000 vintage comic book advertisements and interpreting their messages.

Zebediah, Ofanite of Trade, Systems Administrator

Zebediah is extremely pragmatic, and devoted to his Archangel's Word – Trade is good, and anything that hinders it is bad. He is constantly active at his computer, throwing his Ofanite energy into coding work. His vessel is thin and tall, with long bony fingers and floppy brown hair. He has the role name Zeke Dunsany, and the online username Zebedee.



PARASCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS LIBRARY

The woman typed quietly, sitting among the bookshelves piled with reports. When she came to the end of the paragraph, she looked up at the cat lying on top of the monitor.

The cat purred, stretched, and a voice murmured in the woman's head. "After my sad experience with Mother Agnes, I had decided that most people were going to be suspicious of a cat . . ."

Parascientific Investigations is an organization that is scorned by most "genuine" scientific groups and universities. It specializes in investigating strange incidents, cattle mutilations, spontaneous combustions, disappearances, and similar events. While the investigators rarely come to definite conclusions, they do hand in some sort of report, which goes into the organization's library.

Parascientific Investigations was launched in the 1950s, after a wave of interest in UFOs and alien life. It was conveniently endowed by Marietta Wilkins, an elderly eccentric who was convinced that aliens had faked Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's photographs of fairies in the 19th century. While she never lived to see him "vindicated," she was satisfied enough by the work which the organization was doing to leave most of her money to it – well tied up in stocks and trusts. (She may have been eccentric, but she wasn't stupid.)

Since then, in spite of frequent efforts by frauds to divert money for their own purposes, the group has been

relatively prosperous. It has a wide membership across the world, though heaviest in America. Members pay a small annual subscription, and receive a monthly magazine (*Parascientific Facts*) with details of recent investigations and advertisements for coming lectures. The magazine is professionally printed, and looks entirely reputable. Back issues are stored with the reports in the organization's library.

While the group does have a few regular investigators on its staff, most of its data is collected by local enthusiasts "on site." Such people notice strange phenomena locally, fill in the report forms provided by the organization (free inside every issue of the magazine!) and send them to P.I.'s headquarters, where they can be processed. This may result in one of their staff being sent out to take a closer look at matters – or the submission may simply end up filed with similar reports.

The actual Director of P.I. is Luther Dench, an extremely skeptical man in his mid-50s. His attitude has served him well, and has won the organization *some* credit in scientific circles (though not much) as he refuses to publish anything in the magazine that hasn't got definite proof behind it. He is one of the least likely people in the world to believe in any paranormal phenomena, unless it's willing to take place in front of him, under controlled laboratory conditions – and even then he'd be dubious. He's a good manager, however, and the staff respect him. Under his Directorship, the organization is even showing a slight profit.



The library itself has recently been moved across town, after it grew too big for the cellar space in the group's main building, and has its own staff. It is currently located in a converted old house three floors high, and is run by Rubiya, a Cherub of Destiny. Rubiya, under the name of Ruby Sherrie, has only just recovered from the paranoia caused by having her beloved papers moved across town – even if that was over a year ago. She keeps the place in spotless order, and has indexed reports by geographical location, type of incident, and person reporting the incident. The library itself can be accessed automatically by any member of the organization. Otherwise, people wishing to check back issues of the organization's magazine must fill in a request form, giving full details of their name and reasons. Non-members who want to actually see the original reports will have to make a personal request to the librarian or the Director to explain their reasons.

The library has another inhabitant (besides Rubiya and her human assistants) which is hardly ever noticed – a cat. Malkin, a large gray tom, is usually found curled up on top of shelves or on radiators. He will be friendly to frequent visitors, but is shy of strangers, and retreats to the further corners of the library if any of them try approaching him. Ruby's attitude is that cats naturally go with libraries, and as he doesn't damage the books, he's welcome to stay.

Rubiya is somewhat less than honest here. Malkin (originally Grimalkin) is an Ethereal with a cat vessel who has survived since the days of the witch trials and who is definitely not allied with the forces of Hell. Rubiya has Yves' permission to let him stay, and is actually typing out his memoirs – but given the circumstances, she will be happier if most other angels never learn what he really is.

Naturally, the library is interesting to Servitors of Judgment – and of the Game – both of whom use it in an attempt to locate Outcasts and Renegades. Reports of spontaneous combustions, mysterious decapitations, and the like may allow them to track down known fugitives, or at least give them locations to investigate. Rubiya assists Servitors of Judgment where necessary. She certainly wouldn't help Servitors of the Game if she recognized them for what they were, but she can't stop normal human members of P.I. from using the library . . .

Luther Dench, Director

Luther Dench is in his mid-50s, with fluffy gray hair and thick glasses. Most people, on seeing him, assume that he's cast in the "mad scientist" model and that he will believe any story of paranormal happenings. This is entirely inaccurate, as he's a dedicated skeptic. He assigns investigations and controls their funding – it takes some

very solid evidence to persuade him to send a team out, let alone give them an expense account. While he understands scientific enthusiasm, he detests letting it obscure "genuine facts."

Rubiya, Cherub of Destiny, Librarian

Rubiya has spent the last 20 years building up her Role, having started as an assistant and taking over when the previous librarian retired. She appears to be in her early 40s, and wears a business suit and neatly-trimmed hair. Her no-nonsense attitude surprises people who expect someone absent-minded or credulous. She is very gentle with genuine members of the organization, believing that the habit of research may eventually lead them into what she considers more useful ways to spend their time. Visiting angels get the brisker side of her personality, and she can be quite sharp-tongued if they are uncertain about what they're supposed to be researching. She's fond of Malkin, and will do her best to help him hide from danger.



Malkin, Ethereal, Library Cat

Malkin began his existence as the concept of a witch's familiar, the traditional mysterious cat. Under the name of Grimalkin he acted as the pet of many old women – some witches, some not. While he was originally slanted toward favoring Hell (as everybody *knew* witches had evil cat familiars) he did have a conscience, and saw the effects of the Inquisition. He saw that his presence and powers had caused some of his favorite "owners" to be burned. He didn't like it. He's now in favor of assisting Heaven – as long as it doesn't mean too much effort, or getting himself dirty. (After all, he *is* a cat.) He rarely leaves the library. He does have the Ethereal Song of Tongues, which he uses to talk with Rubiya, and is a great source of details on traditional Sorcery, having been a witness to a lot of it. There are even some demons who he used to know personally, and who would remember him . . .

PROGRESSIVE BANKING

The sharply-dressed woman posed against the bank counter, smiling. As the cameras flashed, she declared, "When I got this job, I said that I could do it. I think that I have. I can declare that Progressive Banking is going up – and still has a long way to go! We know our markets, and we listen to our customers. We've been here for 100 years, and we'll see out the next century."

This banking firm has recently pulled itself out of a decline, apparently by its own bootlaces. Previously dwindling down toward bankruptcy due to out-of-date investments and stagnant trustees, it now seems to be establishing itself as a minor yet definite player in games of finance. People in the know attribute the change in direction to the new director of the Board of Trustees, a young and vigorous woman by the name of Jeanne Delarue.

Jeanne herself, when questioned on the subject by reporters or junior executives, only smiles, and refers them to the bank's prospectus. If pushed further, she says that the bank has recently changed policies in terms of investment and proactive use of money. She has a master's degree in finance, and will use it to confuse listeners with buzzwords.

Jeanne's solution was simpler than that. The bank has recently made heavy but well-concealed investments in the pornographic video market and its subsidiaries. The revenues are doing wonders for the bank's status.

When Jeanne first became director of the Board of Trustees, she realized that she was being set up to fail. The Trustees intended to blame her for the bank's ruin, then to declare bankruptcy, split the money that was left, and leave her to face angry customers and investors. She is a spirited woman, who decided to use the power that she'd been given. Some quiet investigation supplied the names of shipping firms that publicly transported video cassettes, and that privately (and illegally) transported *pornographic* videos ranging from the mild to the extreme. She diverted money from the bank's less thriving interests into the public ends of some of these firms, using several holding companies to channel the money. She

then privately used some of her own money to facilitate the transport of the less legal porn videos – a bribe here, a tip there – causing the *entire* shipping firm to start taking an upswing. When the bank's investments started showing profits again, the Board was staggered – but couldn't get rid of her.

Jeanne realizes that having the true nature of her activities come out would ruin her, and quite possibly the

bank. Other companies might withdraw their *own* investments, and older customers of the bank might leave it. There would be public protests – and certainly the newspapers would enjoy revealing how the old, traditional bank was secretly investing in modern pornography.

Fortunately, her tracks are reasonably well covered. The channels that the money moves through are secure against anything but a determined and purposeful investigation. (Servitors of Marc could certainly unravel it, and so could police accountants if they started digging.) Her secretary, Maire Luthier, is entirely loyal to her. While there are a number of employees at the bank who would like to see her discredited – mainly those who had hoped for the job of director themselves – nobody has

worked out what's going on yet. Even if they did, they wouldn't want to see the bank ruined, and would be more likely to try to blackmail her into resigning. Thomas Hampson, her closest rival, who works in Foreign Funding, would be particularly likely to try such a ploy.

Unfortunately for Jeanne, she has been too clever in her choice of investments. One of the thriving companies she is funding is actually a group used by Servitors of Lust (and their videos sell *extremely* well.) At the moment, they have no real concern in what is merely another investment in their company, except to appreciate its efficiency. If, for some reason, the money should be cut off – for instance, if Jeanne were forced into removing her funds – then they would take a definite interest in getting it back. Tactics include persuasion or bribery of trust members, pressuring newspapers to drop the topic, controlling the current director of the bank, and so on.



The Board of Trustees are pragmatic, and are happy to own shares in what is now a nicely prosperous business. The fly in the ointment is Jeanne, who is vigorous, driving, power-hungry, and female. She seemed the perfect choice when the bank was supposed to *fail*. Now that it has succeeded, they would be glad to replace her – if only she would give them grounds to do so. They have no idea of how she has revolutionized the investments, and are confident that anybody else could take over where she might leave off. They're wrong.

The main office of the bank is like all its subsidiaries: furnished in 1950s good taste, with heavy counters and thick glass windows. The cashiers are neatly uniformed and must be free of a criminal record to gain their positions. Their watchword is, "The Customer Is Always Right;" all employees and officers of the bank are expected to live up to this.

If the money should be withdrawn from the shipping companies, *without* some other good investment being found, it may well result in the bank going bankrupt. Removing Jeanne from her position is also liable to have this effect, as Thomas Hampson is not as talented as he likes to think he is. If the bank *does* crash and declare bankruptcy, the effect will ripple out to other investors and associated companies, and may cause other bankruptcies. Servitors of Marc should find this undesirable.

Jeanne Delarue, *Director of the Board*

Jeanne is ambitious, talented, and has a sixth sense for what is legal and what isn't. She's carefully made sure that the bank projects aren't actually breaking any laws. This being so, all she has to do is keep them quiet, and collect the reward that she feels her efforts and talent deserve. The thought of actually investing in something violent would horrify her, as she likes to consider herself a basically ethical person. Illegally paying people to transport extreme pornographic videos, however . . . well, that's entirely different, isn't it?

Thomas Hampson, *Head of Foreign Funding*

Thomas has spent the last 20 years working his way up from cashier to funds officer, and felt that he was definitely in line for the position of director. He feels personally slighted by Jeanne's appointment – not just because she's female, but because she's from outside the company. Nothing will convince him that she isn't doing *something* illegal. He'll gladly use blackmail or outright revelation of the facts to remove her from her position. Now, if only he could find out what she's up to . . .

THE ROSE GARDEN

We're hungry, the roses whispered. Julian leaned forward and ran the point of his litter-stick through the vagrant's throat, and held the gurgling man there until he was still.

In the park there is a rose garden – not a large one, but a healthy one, full of vigorous bushes, planted in rich dark soil. Trees surround it on all sides, protecting it from the wind, and two paths lead through it, allowing people to appreciate its beauty.

A small sign states, emphatically, **No Dogs.**

The park gardener is a busy man, but he manages to spend a few hours in the rose garden every day, at dawn and at sunset, in summer and winter. He mulches the soil, he prunes the roses, he removes litter, and he cares for the plants.

He also murders vagrants and buries the bodies under the rose bushes.

Julian Paterson had always lived a quiet life – until the day that he heard the roses talking to him. He had worked in the park since he was twenty, and knew all the trees and bushes that grew there. He might have become a Soldier of Novalis, had any angel noticed him. As it was, he treated the flowers as gently as he treated the lost children in the park. They *were* his family, his world. They were as real to him as any passer-by – more so, even. As winter drew in, he became more and more worried, fearing the cold would kill the roses. Even if the council bought more, they wouldn't be *his* roses. One night, he found a vagrant curled up beneath a tree – and the roses whispered to him.

Julian was a strong man, from all his outdoor work, and it was easy for him to carry the corpse over to the rosebeds and bury it deep in the soil. The vagrant became just another missing person statistic. The rosebushes survived the winter, and were marvelous in spring. Since then, Julian has taken one or two vagrants every winter to help sustain his roses. He makes sure that dogs are kept away, in case of any awkward little incidents regarding bones.

Julian himself has an apartment a couple of blocks from the park, but keeps his gardening tools in a shed on the property. They are kept well-oiled and cleaned meticulously – it would take painstaking forensic analysis to find any traces of blood. The shed is clean, and tidy, and well-lit. Local children often tell each other stories about how "Mr. Parsons locks people away in there if they drop litter," and it's a common game to try and peer through the window.

The rose garden has a number of regulars. There is an elderly author who finds it a quiet place to note down ideas; there are teachers at the local primary school who often bring their classes for nature walks; and, of course,

there are the frequent courting couples who find it *so* romantic. A pair of Servitors of Flowers have passed through and enjoyed the place, citing it as an example of what can be done when man and nature work together. If an Elohite of Flowers ever used his attunement on the roses, though, they might remember strange emotions in the neighborhood.



Julian Paterson, Gardener

Julian is friendly, helpful, and polite, if rather detached, and totally devoted to the park. His personal honor is high, and his morals are good – he just doesn't see anything *wrong* in killing the occasional vagrant to feed the roses. Locals view him as quiet and gentle, and entirely trustworthy. He certainly wouldn't kill any of *them* – only useless layabouts, who are only fit to be fertilizer. Julian is beginning to wonder if he should start feeding the roses in summer, too. A gardener's work is never done.

SAFE SHOPPING SUPERMARKET

The man and woman looked in different directions down the aisle. One wouldn't have thought that they were together.

"Any problems?" she murmured.

He shook his head. "Just a couple of punks. Nothing diabolical. Your end?"

*She shook her head in turn. "Nothing significant. Except for the price on tomatoes. You know, I'd believe **that** was a Vapulan plot . . ."*

This local supermarket is patronized by many local people, and is part of a national chain. It's open around the clock, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is the perfect place to visit if one needs food in a hurry. It has a particularly good range of organically grown vegetables and fruits. These have made it popular with health-food-shoppers – especially as it sells them *cheaper* than most local specialist stores.

The supermarket straddles the boundary between the cheaper shops and the more specialist ones. While most of its stock is cheaply priced, vegetarians and discriminating cooks frequent the shop in order to get ingredients for exotic dishes. This results in a mixed clientele, even including a couple of demons of Haagenti, with ordinary shoppers rubbing shoulders with yuppies looking for the *perfect* chili.

Staff at the supermarket include Rosalyn, a Cherub of Novalis, in the buying department, and Validis, an Elohite of Michael, among the security staff. These two managed to get jobs here entirely independently of each other, and had been working on the staff for a year and a half before they actually met. It was distrust at first sight – while neither is actually *prejudiced*, certain first reactions are common between Servitors of War and Flowers.

However, Rosalyn was intelligent enough to see that Validis did an excellent job with the security staff, and Validis wasn't going to flee the area just because a Cherub of Flowers happened to be around. They reached something of a practical truce; neither is involved in the other's area of work, but they share information if something relevant should happen to come up. In the case of known demonic activity in the supermarket or surrounding area, they would inform each other. This does, however, mean that some dubious activity falls "between the cracks" as neither of them considers it part of their area to watch over.

One loose area which neither of them has yet noticed is that Jon Tesser, a cashier, has begun pilfering from the cash registers. He has managed to get hold of duplicate keys (taking a copy one day when the head cashier was sick) and daily removes small amounts from each one. The reason isn't any prettier – he has a poker habit and currently owes a large amount at the local illegal gambling facilities. He's trying to pay it off by stages, but the fact that he bets again every time he goes there isn't helping matters. Sooner or later, the man who runs the gambling is going to lose patience and send a squad of goons to collect the money – one way or another. As they know that Jon works at the supermarket, they'll look for him there first. Naturally, Jon will claim to know nothing about them and never to have seen them before in his life.

The supermarket has a wide parking lot in front of it and around to the side – although, due to the natural condition of parking lots, it's always hard to find a space. The entrance and exit are in one corner, leading into the main body of the supermarket. Long aisles stock the different food products, with a larger than usual space being set aside for naturally grown fruits and vegetables. Pharmaceutical products are in the far corner from the entrance. The checkout lanes where the cashiers sit are in a line along the side of the supermarket, and naturally bar the way to the exit.

There are a number of security cameras around the supermarket, watched by one of the security staff in the administrative offices that lie alongside the main building. All cashiers and security guards wear badges with their first names on them. There are usually a couple of security staff moving through the supermarket at any time, with another couple in the administrative offices. Should there be any trouble, the security staff member on duty at the video monitors will alert the local police, while the other security staff will investigate.

The supermarket has been operating for the last 40 years. Its new expansion into the organic foods market occurred five years ago, and has proved to be a good investment. The owner, Dennis Mathers, is considering stocking a larger proportion of non-factory-produced meat. Rosalyn thinks this would be excellent, but doesn't want to push him too hard, for fear of his reacting in the opposite direction. If any other angels could provide a bit of impetus, she'd be very grateful.

Dennis Mathers, Supermarket Owner

Dennis Mathers is a self-made man in his 50s, who will describe himself as such in every other sentence. Driven, intelligent, and ambitious, he rose through his own efforts, and is convinced that everyone else could do as

much if only they *tried*. This makes him rather unsympathetic toward the unemployed, or people who have difficulty in holding down jobs. He doesn't like to think that he's being manipulated by other people, as it offends his personal pride. He's very protective of his supermarket, and will try to prosecute anybody caught shoplifting or creating a disturbance inside it. He often wanders around it, fondly imagining himself incognito to the staff, to check on service and morale.

Rosalyn, Cherub of Flowers, Supermarket Buyer

Rosalyn appears as a plump woman in her 40s, and her habit of keeping a box of designer chocolates in her desk to nibble doesn't help matters. She's had her current Role, under the name of Rose Lindens, for 16 years now. It's been a long uphill struggle to persuade Dennis Mathers into the current buying strategy, and she's determined to keep it going. She's something of a mother confessor to all the other administration staff, and takes any criticism very gently, merely nodding her head and saying, "Please go on, dear." Validis recognized this as an effective combat strategy, and ignores it.

Validis, Elohite of War, Security Staff

Validis is a smooth-spoken Servitor of War, with a manner both easy-going and ruthless. While he never expected to find himself having to work with a Servitor of Flowers, he's sensible enough not to throw away the advantages of the terrain. His own vessel is a black man in his 30s, under the name of Will Bagues, one of the oldest of the security staff. He's working on building up a long-term deep cover with this Role. The other security staff are convinced that he's having a secret affair with Rose Lindens – either that, or he can't stay away from her chocolates. He doesn't like getting into open brawls unless there's no other choice.

Jon Tesser, Cashier, Gambler

Jon is in his 20s, and has always had a poker habit – all the way back to cheating when he played cards with his little sister at six. Now that he gambles for money, he has enough sense not to cheat, but not enough sense to give it up. He is smartly dressed, almost too smartly for his job, and always has his hair fashionably styled. He'll deny any connection with illegal gambling, as he doesn't want to jeopardize his job. If he thinks he's being suspected of the thefts, he'll put one of his duplicate keys into the pocket of a coworker, and try and shift the blame onto them.

SEASONAL PUBLISHING

The aspiring author folded her hands together in her lap, as the man opposite her flicked through the booklets she'd brought along. Do I have a chance? she wondered. Is this the moment when I finally get my cat-movement divination system into print?

At last he finished, shuffled the booklets together, and smiled at her. "Congratulation, Ms. Davison. I think that you definitely have something there that we can sell. Now, about percentages . . ."

Seasonal Publishing is a vanity press, which produces books and pamphlets about New Age subjects. Hopeful authors – upon paying a large amount of money to subsidize the costs – can get their great works printed. The books are then sold in New Age stores, though they rarely get into large chain bookshops. A small percentage of the sales is paid to the author. It is a sad fact of the business that most authors aren't as good as they think that they are, and rarely come out ahead on the deal.

Seasonal Publishing's secret is that it's actually an Ethereal outpost. It's manned by a few Greek nymphs, and supervised by an Ethereal Soldier who believes he's the long-lost descendant of the hero Theseus. The organization works on encouraging general belief in the supernatural – both in the authors it publishes, and in the people to whom it supplies books. While it doesn't often deal with particularly Greek themes, its general tone is to strengthen belief in polytheism, animism, and anything *other* than the mainstream religions. The Ethereals figure that if they can influence enough people, the societal pendulum will eventually start swinging their way again.

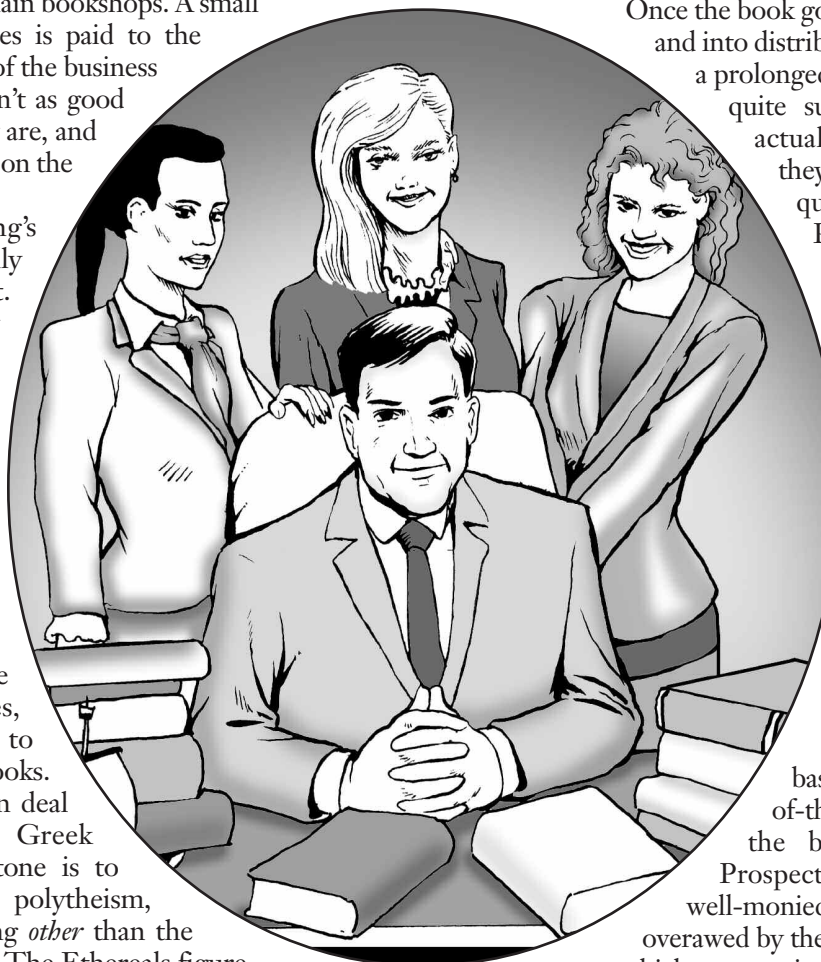
Unfortunately, there's a fly in the ointment. Zeruah, a Servitor of Kobal, discovered that the publishing firm was used by Ethereals, while trying to seduce a secretary

and set up a joke on someone else. He promptly set about working his way into the firm. This took seven years, but he's managed to reach a position as a junior executive, and has been working on what he considers to be a *really* effective joke.

Zeruah has managed to submit a manuscript of his own, under a false name, and has used his position in the firm to slide it past all relevant checks and formalities. It's called, *Getting In Touch With Your Inner Archangel*, and describes people in terms of basic personality types matching the 13 major Archangels. The book's described aim is to help you define yourself in those terms, and then live up to your full potential – somewhat like the signs of the zodiac. If he can just get it past the last few checks and into production, it'll get distributed to New Age shops throughout the country.

Once the book goes through production and into distribution, Zeruah will take a prolonged leave of absence. He's quite sure that when angels actually start noticing it, they'll be turning up to ask questions at Seasonal Publishing. He confidently expects them to find the Ethereals there, to assume they were behind it, and for the whole thing to turn into a bloodbath. He's considering contacting Servitors of Nybbas to try and publicize the book after that – after all, it's well-written. It might even become a best-seller.

The firm itself is based in a dignified turn-of-the-century building, in the better part of town. Prospective authors, unless well-monied themselves, tend to be overawed by the surroundings. Carpets are thick, secretaries are well-dressed, and the general decor is Grecian in style, with a lot of marble columns. (Imitation marble, actually, but it's the thought that counts.) There is a display bookcase next to the seats, full of titles that the firm has published in the past. A secretary will welcome clients, and ask them to wait until the manager can see them.



The manager, Theo Courtney, has a well-appointed office off the reception area, even more thickly carpeted. He will treat even the most exotic client with respect and courtesy, as such people (even more so than the average) may have a strong belief in the paranormal which can be exploited. Theo has a good marketing sense, and twelve years' experience in his current job – he's not stupid enough to accept an obviously losing proposition. He will, however, subsidize a promising author out of his own (or the firm's own) pocket, if the author himself is short on money. This isn't out of any particular kindness of heart; it's to foster the firm's own aims.

The ground behind the building has a small garden set in it, with a stream running through it. The nymphs on the staff like to rest here while not at work. While they technically have apartments elsewhere in town, they usually keep a spare set of clothes in the building, and spend the night sleeping outdoors naked. (This has been noticed by a couple of neighbors – however, they'd rather exercise their binoculars than bother telling anybody else about it.) Theo has rooms at the top of the building, for use in case of emergencies, and another apartment elsewhere in town.

The firm has been operating for 20 years now. It started off very small-scale, but expanded and stabilized when Theo became manager. He has valuable accounting and business experience – an MA in Business Studies at Harvard, even – and was able to get the firm back on track. His extensive private fortune allow him to claim occasional financial losses as tax write-offs, thus covering the fact that a lot of money goes to printing stuff that doesn't sell well. The three nymphs on the staff – Mairead, Stephanisse, and Arianne – all have secretarial posts. They keep clients happy, and check the texts of books to make sure that they're publishable. (Theo may be good with finances, but he has *no* critical sense when it comes to literature.) Zeruah has a junior executive job, unremarkable but dependable – which is just how he wants it.

Zeruah, Balseraph of Dark Humor

Zeruah (under the cover name of Zane Verrotto) has spent the last seven years on the buildup to this joke, but he expects it to be worth it. His Vessel is in the form of a man in his late 30s, of Italian extraction, usually wearing a natty suit. He acts in an openly seductive way toward attractive women nearby, reasoning that they'll then stereotype and forget him. He is devious, vengeful, and feels that he has unrealized talent as an author. (He's not actually *that* good; merely average.) If this joke comes off, he'll try and find some other field to use this talent in. He expects to be rewarded by Kobal, and hasn't even considered the possibilities that any demon might disapprove of a book about Archangels.

Theo Courtney, Manager

Theo Courtney inherited his wealth, and is very happy about it. His family is of Greek descent, from generations back, and he's always enjoyed studying the mythology. When a nymph actually *appeared* to him on his family estate, he believed at once. Fortunately, he had the potential to become a Soldier. He's now in his late 30s, and working on expanding the firm *without* drawing angelic or demonic attention. If trouble should arrive, he'd try and make sure that he was publicly well enough known that nobody could just make him or the firm "disappear." He would certainly never knowingly let a book like Zeruah's get published. In person, he's polite but firm, with glasses and blond hair. He nurtures a secret belief that he's actually a descendant of the mythical hero Theseus.



THE SIMON HENDERSON LOCAL HISTORY MUSEUM

The young man stalked through the museum, eyeing the other visitors who were inspecting the exhibits and murmuring to each other. His air was baughty, and his manner decisive.

*The young woman at the reception desk sighed, and muttered to her friend, "You know, you'd have thought a guy who comes here as often as he does would actually look at the **exhibits** . . ."*

This museum stands in the older part of town, set up by the wealthy Simon Henderson in the Victorian period. Simon Henderson is long since dead, but he left his collection of local artifacts to the museum, and sufficient funds (invested carefully) to keep it open. These days it's visited by teachers shepherding school classes, and students looking for easy project material. The curator still

keeps it in good repair, and from time to time changes the exhibits, using the copious spare material in the back rooms. (The precise nature of the artifacts is left to the local setting and campaign.)

Naturally, such a place might seem an ideal location for local Ethereals to base themselves. (They might be strengthened by an interest in local history or folklore, as such things *spawn* dreams.) Athanasius, a Malakite of Laurence, is aware of this, and regularly inspects the museum. He spends an hour or two there every week, resonating people showing any suspicious traits (such as examining the exhibits too closely, or planning to expand the museum's influence). He hasn't bothered to check the curator, Mr. Keith Brands, for a while now, having decided that the man was clearly too materialistic to be affected by Ethereals. Unfortunately, this means that he has entirely missed the fact that Keith Brands is illegally selling off the more valuable exhibits to unscrupulous collectors.

The affair is complicated by the fact that Simon Henderson – although dead – has never left the museum. His ghost still walks the corridors and inspects the exhibits, seen by visitors at odd moments. He is an Apparition (*Corporeal Players Guide*, p. 82) without the ability to affect the corporeal world directly. He has only enough intelligence left to keep him repeating the activities he enjoyed during life, in his beloved museum. He doesn't comprehend what Keith Brands is doing, or what Athanasius is. Visitors who have seen an old man in Victorian costume around the building have assumed that he was an actor brought in to enhance the experience.

The museum itself occupies the whole of an old house. The ground floor is devoted to display cases, and a couple of rooms have been fitted out as "period displays" for the 19th century, complete with appropriate furniture and ornaments. A small cubbyhole in the front hall has been turned into an office, where the receptionist takes the money of people entering. The post of receptionist alternates between several local students – it's not well-paid, but it's an easy job. The upper floors are used for the storage of exhibits not currently on display, and for Keith Brands' personal quarters. His rooms are fairly frugal, though an examination of his bank account will show that he can afford better. Such an examination will also show a set of very interesting and unexplained payments from various sources into his account. There is a typewriter on his desk table, and a set of incriminating letters and carbon copies under his bed.



The angels strode through the glassed-in displays of the museum, hurrying after the retreating form of the Malakite. Athanasius was clearly annoyed at having to waste time talking to them.

"Your questions are ridiculous. Of course there aren't any Outcasts hanging around here," he snapped over his shoulder. "I check the place regularly."

The Seraph frowned in approval. "Very wise. One never knows where the ethereals may try and establish an outpost." He turned to his companion. "Don't you agree, Juvenal?"

"It's Juve," the Mercurian muttered, not for the first time. "Could he have sneaked into a tour or something? You've got regular work, you can't be here *all* the time. There must have been a lot of visitors with the Docks History exhibition last week."

Athanasius finally slowed down and faced his pursuers with a shrug. "I didn't notice what it was about. It kept the curator busy. Look, my reports are all on file if you need to check them."

Juvenal smiled wearily. "We did. 'No activity. Humans still dishonorable. A.'"

The Malakite smiled. "Says it all, doesn't it?"

These payments and letters, naturally, are from his illegal dealings. Keith Brands is in contact with a number of collectors or dealers who are less than scrupulous about where their antiquities come from. (It's quite plausible that an investigation from an unscrupulous collector could lead back to *him*. He corresponds by letter to determine a convenient place for delivery and payment. His excuse for being away from the museum for a day is that of a convention or museum exhibit elsewhere. Simon Henderson had a great many valuable artifacts in the collection that he donated to the museum, and the previous curator was an alcoholic who never got around to tabulating the entire set of exhibits. This has made it easy for Keith Brands to extract objects and conceal their absence. It is also the reason for his frequently changing displays – he wants to avoid people ever being certain exactly what or how much the museum possesses. When he finally leaves the museum, he'd prefer to do so without being prosecuted for theft . . .

Athanasius views his visits as a regular chore. He doesn't expect to find anything there (he's been check-

ing for four years now) but he feels that it's his duty to be watchful. If anybody mentioned a sighting of Simon Henderson's ghost to him, he'd view it as definite evidence of Ethereal activity and mount an investigation. Should he discover who the ghost was, he'd try and find some way to move it on to its proper destination (which would be Heaven – Simon Henderson *was* a good man, and met his Destiny.) Most of the time he's preoccupied by his activities elsewhere in town.

The museum itself does have a good collection of local historical artifacts (and better than most people suspect.) They're in excellent condition, and well-cared for – Keith Brands is conscientious about that aspect of his job. Someone wanting to research local history for the last couple of hundred years could do a great deal worse than coming here. The funds that maintain it are still enough to keep it running for another 100 years or so . . .

Keith Brands, Curator

Keith Brands is in his mid-50s, with graying brown hair, half-glasses, a Boston accent and an absent-minded air. This hides the soul of a truly venal man, whose private vision of bliss is an expensive country house and a huge bank account. He doesn't want the money for any particular purpose or acquisition – he just wants *money*. This isn't due to his background, as he came from a middle-class family who were able to pay for his Harvard degree in history. He got a masters degree and a Ph.D., and worked his way through a number of jobs at museums around the world. This helped him establish his current network of contacts. He hopes to serve a few more years, then quietly retire and live in luxury. If he should think that he's been spotted, he will destroy all his incriminating letters. If he finds out that anybody is *seriously* investigating his bank account, he'll make a run for it.

Athanasius, Malakite of the Sword

Athanasius is a Malakite who's been around on earth for several hundred years, and who specializes in violently smiting evil wherever it may be found. Unfortunately, monetary fraud isn't an area he's good at spotting. He is conscientious enough to have been checking the museum for the last few years (among his other duties), but no longer really expects to find anything there. His manner is curt and brisk, and he has a low tolerance for angels not actively involved on the front lines. He appears as a young man in his mid-20s, with dark hair and a snub nose, and has a Role as a newspaper reporter. (His direct boss at the newspaper – though not celestially – is a Soldier of God who makes sure that he stays on the employment rolls, even if he never hands in any articles. It gives him an excellent excuse to prowl the town searching for evil.)

WILSON PRIVATE DETECTIVES

The man settled his glasses on his nose, then added another note to the file. At this point the woman spoke to the policeman, looking him in the eye, and convinced him that she was a member of the Vice Squad without showing any identification whatsoever. This kind of casual impersonation is typical of a member of the "Balseraph" section of the "Hell" faction . . .

This detective agency was founded in 1935 by James Wilson, in the days of gangs and policemen, when a good private detective walked the path between legality and illegality. He passed the agency on to his son-in-law, Bruce Everson, who still keeps it running. Even in this modern day – especially in this modern day – there is a market for detectives to watch people and places, and to provide reports.

Nowadays, the agency is prospering. Bruce receives a steady income from the old standby of suspicious husbands or wives checking up on their spouses, and sporadic fees for more exotic investigations. The Agency has run checks on personal backgrounds and criminal records, has traced people halfway around the world, and has secretly and illegally accessed a number of government and organizational records. They charge a lot, but they're worth the money.

The agency is, in fact, good enough that *both* angels and demons have been known to use its resources. These are low-ranking angels and demons, but very rarely of Judgment or the Game – both of *those* groups have their own resources when it comes to investigations. As such, though they've managed to suborn one or two of the detectives from time to time, neither Heaven nor Hell has ever brought the entire agency under their control.

Bruce is a man capable of believing almost anything – he's seen so much in his career. From years of evidence, he has come to believe that there are two hidden factions in the general population, who are – or who call them-

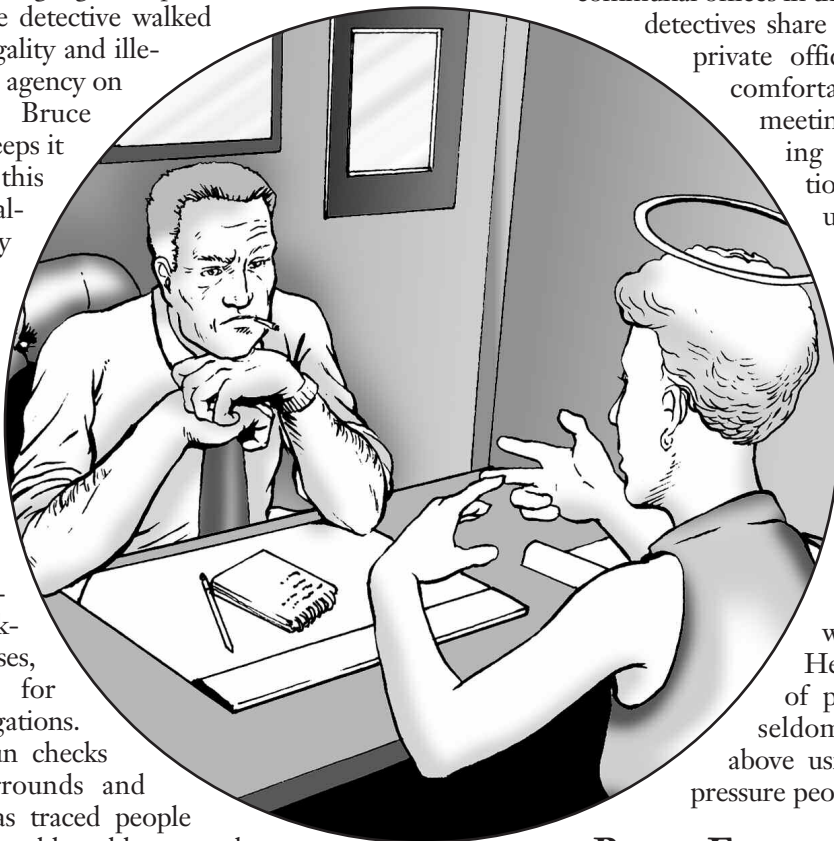
selves – angels and demons. As an agnostic, he's never been bothered with the formalities of religion, but is prepared to concede that supernatural beings may exist. In any case, he accepts that the different *groups* exist, and gathers any information that he can on their members while carrying out their commissions. He hasn't yet decided what to do with this information.

Thirty detectives work for the Agency, together with half a dozen secretarial staff. Junior detectives are expected to type up their own reports and to share one of the communal offices in the building, while senior

detectives share a secretary and have a private office. There are several comfortable, well-appointed meeting rooms in the building for private consultations. The actual offices used by the detectives are sparse and basic.

Bruce approves or refuses all jobs for the Agency, and is a good at bargaining when it comes to the price of services. He won't engage in anything illegal unless he's certain that it's not a police sting, and that the client involved will keep quiet about it.

He's a good enough judge of personalities that he is seldom deceived, and isn't above using quiet blackmail to pressure people into silence.



Bruce Everson, Head of Wilson Private Detectives

Bruce is charismatic, intelligent, and capable of believing a great deal. He accepts that there are two factions – whether they are *really* Heaven and Hell, or whether they just believe that, is unimportant. He also suspects that if either side realized that he knew this, they would decide that it was too dangerous to let him go free. Luckily, nobody seems to expect this sort of insight from a "human." He finds it easy to play the innocent and simply take orders, while increasing his own, private dossier on these two factions. Bruce has wiry gray hair, small glasses (which aren't actually necessary) and a lanky frame. He wears drab suits and exotic ties.

CELESTIAL LOCATIONS



74

CELESTIAL LOCATIONS

THE NAMING OF LOCATIONS

In Heaven and Hell, the natural tongue of the inhabitants is Celestial – the language of angels, or the language of demons. This presents occasional problems in translation, as celestial languages were not created for mortal concepts. They were created to describe angelic concepts – or, in the case of the demonic tongue, to pervert them. A single word in any corporeal tongue might take a dozen chords to express in the angelic tongue, and vice versa. The *actual* name of a place in Heaven or Hell may be 25 chords of celestial music untranslatable into any Corporeal language, and wouldn't make any sense anyway unless the listener had a doctorate in comparative religion.

This is why many celestial locations may be referred to simply as “Fred's Place” or something similar. Nicknames for places are less common in Heaven than in Hell, but far from unknown – blessed souls frequently use them. Seraphim will often find this *imperfect* description inherently annoying, though, and insist on pronouncing a place's full title. Others, Mercurians and Impudites in particular, may prefer the more Corporeal term.

The Cathedrals of the Archangels and the Palaces of the Princes need no shortening or simplification. The description in the celestial tongue for any of them is simply a modification of the Superior's own name, as the place is an expression of the essential nature of the Superior. While a pseudonym or nickname might be used, it is not necessary. Of course, in human languages, the names of these places are often translated to some equivalent term – such as Jean's “Halls of Progress.”

TRAVELING BETWEEN LOCATIONS

There is very rarely a fixed path between two locations in Heaven or Hell, no set number of paces and turnings. All defined places are *discrete*, separate things created through the deliberate will or actions of a Superior or celestial or soul – or God himself. The path between them varies with the desire of the traveler and the will of the Superior who controls that realm. In Jean's Halls of Progress, for instance, routes are well-defined and measurable, but in David's Caverns the passages reject outsiders, shortening the travel of Servitors of Stone but confusing others. In Gehenna supply dumps and bunkers are in regular patterns and known sites, but in the Archives of Kronos a soul might wander forever through the same corridors and be lost in a different place every time. Passages *between* the areas created by different Superiors are just as mutable – though the physical area of the passage remains constant, its location in respect to the two realms can change.

However, travel is possible. In Heaven, *looking* for a public place is usually enough to find it. Angels native to a Cathedral have a natural sympathy with the place, enough to be able to give directions inside the locality. However, finding a location which the Archangel of a Cathedral *wishes* to remain secret is extremely difficult, as the Cathedral itself will work against the searcher. In Hell, again, searching for a place is helpful in finding it, as the place responds to the deliberate effort of will. However, it is naturally more difficult than Heaven – it is, after all, Hell. A shop may remain in the same relation to half a

dozen others, but the entire block may have slipped by several streets. Again, residents of a Principality will have a greater ability to negotiate their own Prince's ground, and the entire area will respond to the will of a Prince. While a discrete structure may exist that connects a fixed set of points (such as the *Shal-Mari Metro*, p. 108), that structure is a location in itself. It can and will “shift location” inside the Principality, even though the points it connects to remain the same.

Navigation Of Heaven: v041.0

In the absence of clearly-defined geographic structure obvious to those of less than Archangelic grade, it has been decided to issue the following booklets. Please fill in the enclosed questionnaire and return it, in order to improve the efficiency of future cartography.

All locations listed in the index to this booklet are classified both by full name and by common referential term. Thus, you will find “Coffee Central” as well as its full celestial descriptor. This is a new addition to v040.0 of this booklet, in which only

the celestial descriptor was included, as it was found that certain Choirs and souls were having difficulty in navigation. Efficiency is all.

When traveling, if uncertain of your destination, please go to the Cathedral of the relevant Archangel *first*, and then attempt relocation from there. Remember that celestials native to the Cathedral are likely to have a far better grasp of its geography than visitors. Servitors of Lightning, in particular, are always ready to provide directions or access to maps of the Halls of Progress.

– Ithuriel, Seraph of Lightning

Heaven



THE BUTTERFLY HILLS

The young woman wandered dreamily through the clouds of butterflies, raising her hand as they flickered past. "Oh, God," she murmured, "they're so beautiful. This is Heaven."

Then she winced and recoiled. A cluster of serpents reared from a hollow in the ground at her feet, uncoiling and hissing at her.

*"Be careful," murmured the Elobite beside her. "This is Heaven for **them**, too, you know."*

On Jordi's Savannah, the souls of animals roam in eternal freedom. There are deserts and forests, plains and meadows, caves and eyries, providing the perfect habitat for every spirit who comes there. Even the souls of insects – especially the souls of insects, Kyriotates say – frequent the place, swarming and fluttering amid ideal flowers and perfect shelters.

One area of the Savannah (among the many) is a stretch of hilly ground, with springing green grass covered by drifts of flowers. Butterflies fly there, tossed by the wind like living rainbows, with great flights of them moving through the sky and settling on the flowers. Their only concern, for the rest of eternity, is the paradise of sunlight and air and nectar.

Many human souls come from other parts of Heaven to see the glories of butterflies in the sunlight. It is a particularly pleasant place for children to visit, and they run across the hillside, enjoying the air that is so much purer than any Earthly air.

However, this is a paradise for *animals*. Jordi has had to make sure that there are a number of his angels stationed there on permanent duty to stop the human souls pestering the animal souls, who merely want to behave in their uncomplicated animal way. The angels also stop the human souls wandering too far afield. For some reason, delicate human sensibilities are affronted by predators doing what is perfectly *natural* to the predators.

The Butterfly Hills lie close to the border of Novalis' Glade – indeed, in some areas the boundary between the two is blurred. The butterflies certainly don't pay any attention to the borders, drifting to the flowers that fill the Glade, and back again. Human souls who are lost in the Butterfly Hills and are uncomfortable with the rest of the Savannah often find themselves wandering into the Glade.

Jordi is not precisely happy that parts of his Savannah are being used for *tourist visits*, though he will accept any souls who genuinely love the area. He does understand it when human children come to play there – after all, animal cubs would do as much. The main task of the angels stationed around the Hills is therefore to care for the safety of the souls of children. They are assisted in this by Servitors of Christopher (the Archangel of Children, *Night Music*, p. 16.) Adult souls are presumed either to know what they're doing, or to be capable of dealing with whatever they get into. While none of the animal souls would *attack* a human soul, certain human souls might find themselves frightened.

Asha, Ofanite of Animals, Watcher

Asha is a young Ofanite, and somewhat annoyed to have a task here, away from all the *action* on Earth. However, her Archangel has ordered her here . . . so she does her duty without too many complaints. She can't bring herself to dislike the innocent, natural-spirited children, but takes a certain pleasure in letting wandering adult souls stray into less tame areas of the Savannah. Asha is rather short with Servitors of other Words, considering *her* Archangel's Word to be clearly superior. If asked by such an angel to locate somebody, it would take evidence of an actual threat to make her do more than point in the general direction.

THE CLOCKWORK COUNTER OF THE NAMES OF GOD

*Placidly the glistening pistons drove up and down, and the clockwork gears turned smoothly. Two young men were polishing the dark casing of the base, working their way patiently around the room. At the center of the machinery, a single strip of paper folded patiently down into a waiting tray, studded with names: **God, Allah, All-Highest, God . . .***

In Jean's Halls of Progress, there is a room that is full of gleaming clockwork and oiled gears, progressing with the inevitability of time itself. A continuous strip of paper prints out from among the driving levers and ticking dials, bearing a list of names in all the languages of Earth.

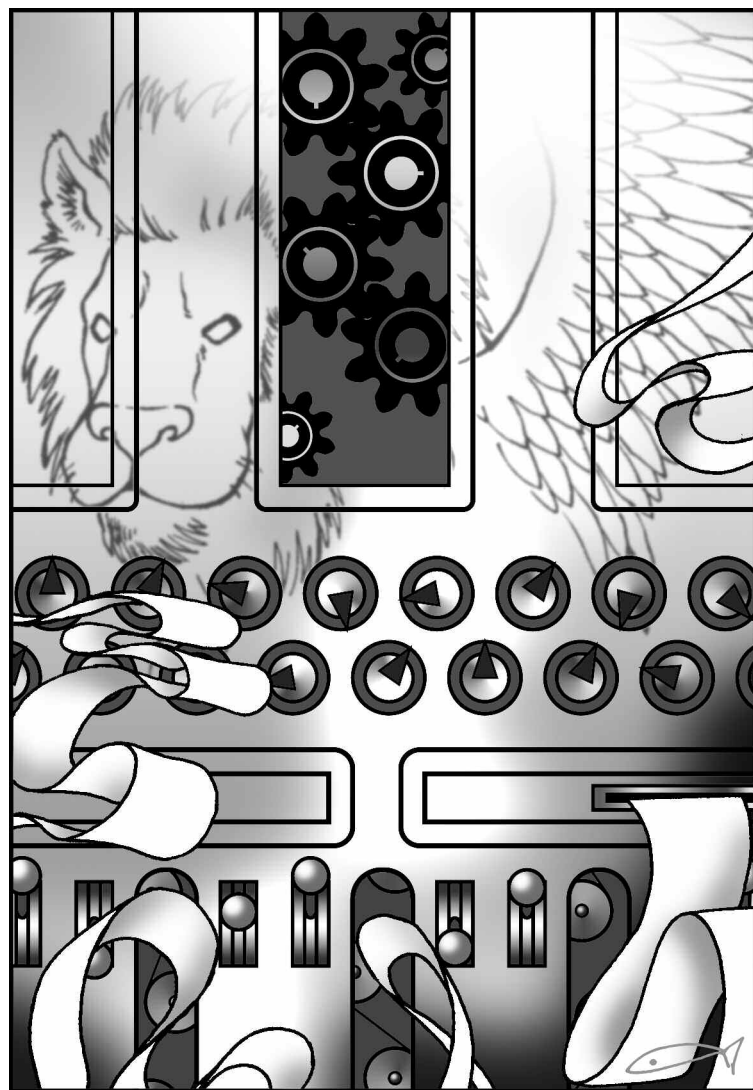
This is the Clockwork Counter of the Names of God. Devised and built in the first century BC, it ticks over every time a human on Earth invokes a Name of God, and prints out the Name called upon. It has been enlarged over the centuries, and worn-out parts are regularly replaced. (There are enough redundancies in the system that some functions can be diverted while the clockwork is replaced.) It has not paused or stopped since it was first started by the hand of Jean himself.

The Counter is largely tended by human souls, rather than by angels. Many souls find the device a comforting thing in itself, to be able to see that people on Earth are continuously invoking God. Angels of Jean, in turn, prefer to be on active duty elsewhere, so are happy to let human souls tend to its functioning. However, there is always at least one Cherub on duty at the Counter, and usually a few relievers as well. The Cherub, besides watching the Counter for any difficulties, also checks the printout for any *new* Names. If any are found, they are written down by hand in a leather-bound book kept at the entrance of the room.

Some Servitors of Jean, or visiting souls, feel that the Counter is outdated, and could easily be replaced by a suitable computer. Jean, however, never a devotee of newness merely for its own sake, feels that the Counter is still perfectly efficient. It is also the case that many souls – and even angels – find the endless quiet ticking of the Counter comfortable and soothing. Often souls new to Heaven may spend days there, finding in the clockwork of the Counter the same note as in the choirs of angels – the praise of God, in many names and many places.

Abrusti, Cherub of Lightning, Guardian of the Counter

The Cherub who usually guards the Counter is Abrusti, who has been performing the task since the Counter was first created. She has little experience with



Earth itself, and most of her knowledge of humans comes from the human souls who help tend the Counter. While she believes that the room should be kept in *silence* and not disturbed by casual chatter, she is a kind being. If people want to talk, she will quietly ask them to do it elsewhere.

What profoundly irks her is that the place has become something of a tourist spot for visiting souls – as an example of *antiquated* machinery, even! This annoys her greatly, as she feels that it goes against the basically sacred nature of the Counter. She would not want to stop the truly interested from seeing it or working with it, however, so she grits her teeth and tolerates the visiting parties. If any person truly admires the classic mechanisms, or wishes to check the Book of the Names of God, she will unbend and be as helpful as she can. She has an extremely soft spot for anybody who wants to know how the clockwork works.

COFFEE CENTRAL

The Elohite leaned on the counter, folding its arms. "How," it asked, "do you take your coffee?"

*The human soul blinked. "Isn't there just a **Heaven** blend or something?"*

*The Elohite shook her head. "Goodness gracious, no. We get all our best variants from Earth. Mocha, Cap Colombie, Java . . ." It reached across to pat the young woman's hand. "We're here for **your** benefit. Just remember, the customer is always right."*



Commerce Park, governed by Marc, is one of the most human-seeming places in Heaven. This is possibly because its Archangel (a Mercurian) and his Word are shaped by humanity, or possibly because it's difficult to Trade without in some ways echoing buying and selling on Earth. In any case, the place is full of shops and all that goes with them – including sidewalk cafes.

Throughout history, people have always made deals over a cup of coffee. One could cite the coffee-shop *Jonathan's*, in London in the 17th century, where the collection of traders met who later founded the Stock Exchange (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 84) and doubtless other examples throughout history. Even among angels, a business deal can go more easily with the help of food or drink to soothe the participants.

There are a number of sidewalk cafes scattered through the Park – and more spring up every day. One of the most prominent, due to its quality and style, is the cafe known as Coffee Central. It's been running for a couple of hundred years now, and is as popular among souls as it is among angels. Somehow it never seems to be overcrowded, though it is always *busy*, and there is always a spare table at the back for private conversations.

Coffee Central is run jointly by Roderick, a Cherub of Trade, and Chagiel, an Elohite of Creation. Roderick began the enterprise with the intention of operating primarily for souls. He didn't expect it to develop in the way that it did – though, in retrospect, he has had to admit that angels are also likely to frequent a *good* cafe. He recruited Chagiel to provide coffee and cakes. Chagiel was at the time not working on any particular task, and thought that providing good food and drink to the souls of the blessed was an extremely optimal thing. These days, with half the clientele angelic, the Elohite is beginning to wonder if it is actually *needed* here as much. Still, the human clientele appreciates its services – which is good enough for it for the moment.

Coffee Central is sited at the theoretical boundary where the Bazaar shifts from light-weight trading in cheaper goods to serious dealing in relics and the like. While no such line actually exists, there is a perceptible change in the goods sold and the level of payment received. Roderick thought – correctly – that souls in this area of Heaven would enjoy being able to watch high-level dealing in progress. (He regrets deeply that he can't manage a cafe overlooking the Seraphim Council meeting room.)

Angels began frequenting Coffee Central shortly after it opened. Frequent customers were those whose dealings weren't *quite* important enough to be in the high-level district. The angels found that a lot of the souls present had been involved in business in life, and were capable of providing useful advice after death. As word of the place spread, more young angels began to pay visits. The blessed souls were glad to oblige with advice. Even if it was occasionally out of date, the general principles were sound.

The cafe itself is set under a large canopy, with the serving counter at the center. Toward the back are a number of private tables, where souls or angels can talk out of the way of the crowd. At the sides and front, both out in the sunlight, and under the shade of the canopy, are public tables and assorted chairs. All sorts of chairs are available for any form of celestial – Roderick wants his customers to be comfortable, and a human-sized chair simply doesn't *fit* everyone.

Chagiel stays at the central counter, while relievers carry refills of drinks or food out to the tables. *All* first orders have a price of one point of Essence, but with that paid, the customers are welcome to stay all day and get refills on the house. Chagiel's particular trick is to use its *Abacadabra* attunement to produce a pound of coffee to the customer's exact specification. It then stores what isn't used on the spot, either to serve to the customer later, or to serve to other customers looking for a new taste. The cafe *can* provide alcohol, but very rarely has to. Most of the customers aren't there for the intoxication of alcohol, but for the business of Trade.

Roderick regularly moves around the cafe, checking on customers, and making sure they have everything that they want. He has – once or twice – had to remove rowdy angels from the premises. Despite the general good fellowship that goes with the word of Trade, there are always going to be a *few* people who end up making a nuisance of themselves – usually visiting angels from other Superiors. In those cases he is firm, mild, and capable. All the regular customers know him and Chagiel, and will greet them on entering the cafe.

Roderick, Cherub of Trade

Roderick's native form is that of a winged polar bear. Created about 500 years ago, he served on Earth for a while. He was removed from Earth duty due to a tendency to expect the *best* from everyone – which, while a worthy tendency, wasn't very useful. He finds it a great deal easier to work in Heaven, among angels and blessed souls, where one *can* reasonably expect to find virtue. He enjoys his job, and is delighted to see the way that the cafe has blossomed. He's considering trying to find another Servitor of Creation to assist Chagiel, as with the rise in business it's getting overworked – not that it would admit it. A particular annoyance to him are the Servitors of Wind; they're dishonest, flippant, and are known for not paying their bills. He fails to see where their place is in good business dealings.

Chagiel, Elohite of Creation

Chagiel is younger than Roderick, only about 300 years old. It hadn't had any service on Earth at the point when they met, and had only been occupied with duties in Heaven. This seemed an efficient way to make the souls of the departed happy, and to let it discover thousands of new blends of coffee – one of its hobbies even then. Chagiel spends its occasional free time in the Glade, investigating new coffee variants. And other things such as tea, to be sure, but primarily coffee. The Elohite has absorbed enough of Trade attitudes to be able to declare that "the customer is always right," although it has more respect for customers who'll try a *new* taste.

THE CORRIDOR OF HISTORIES

*The Malakite stalked along the corridor, glaring at the titles. Finally, he turned to the reliever who fluttered behind him. "Don't you have **anything** straightforward about Makatiel?"*

The reliever paused for thought. "With or without commentaries?"



In Yves' Library, there is a particular area given over to the histories of Heaven and Hell. Angels looking for information about times before the Fall, Princes (dead or alive), or the Purity Crusade will find themselves there eventually.

To call it merely a corridor is a misnomer – the section is *far* larger than simply a corridor. However, when an angel is looking for a particular piece of information, or researching a particular area, he will always find himself in a corridor. Both ends seem within walking distance, even if they are some way away. As he walks along the corridor, the ends remain distant no matter how far he goes.

Within the Corridor are books that have been collected by Yves from Heaven, Earth, and Hell. Propaganda histories by demons rub shoulders with more accurate works by angels, and commentaries by humans are interspersed throughout. From time to time, Dominic has complained that the clearly *false* works by the demons have no place in Heaven. Yves always replies that it's the nature of his Library to contain books – whether or not they're true is an entirely separate issue.

The entire Corridor is cared for by Tirshatha, a Cherub of Yves with the Friend of the Sages distinction. He worked his way up from the position of reliever, and has never actually been to Earth nor met a demon. (He has, however, read *all* about them.) A number of relievers work under his orders, reshelving books and adding new ones. Relievers who have worked on the Corridor often go on to service on Earth, and usually have a better acquaintance with celestial history than many of their colleagues. When in Heaven again, they frequently visit the Corridor to see Tirshatha, who is always glad to hear the latest news.

While (naturally) nobody is allowed to remove books, or to deface them, Yves recognizes that people will often need to take information away with them. The Corridor is therefore well-supplied with paper and pens, so that visiting angels and souls can copy down matters of relevance to them.

The Corridor is usually frequented by angels checking celestial history relevant to current problems on

Earth. Human souls don't come there as often, though some theologians visit regularly in an attempt to make sense of the universe. (It's generally frowned on *authors* coming there to look for material – but it happens from time to time.)

It's very unusual for two angels to meet in the Corridor, unless they're researching *exactly* the same thing. Otherwise, they will never quite encounter each other, even if the subjects they're checking up should be related. On the few occasions when angels *have* found themselves side by side, it has later been revealed that there was a definite link between their investigations. Yves, as ever, makes no comment.

Tirshatha, Curator of the Corridor

Tirshatha has never worked anywhere but the Corridor, and has no desire to ever work anywhere but the Corridor. He's protective enough of his territory that some fellow-Servitors have jokingly called him an "angelic Djinn" – but they don't mean it. Tirshatha simply loves his books, and feels himself truly connected to the history of Heaven while working in the Corridor. He is somewhat cold to angels of other Superiors who claim to have a *better* understanding of Heaven's structure or history than him. However, this doesn't prevent him from always displaying the manners of the perfect librarian – polite, helpful, and knowing the area like the back of his hand.



GENERAL RECORDS

The Mercurian slapped the pile of paper down on the table in front of her. "There you are. Sabbuah, Intercessionist of Flowers, told to come down here by my Lady herself to get your files on Hushbon. How many more bits of paper do I have to fill in to get the file?"

The EloHITE facing her frowned slightly. "You are being remarkably passionate. Please compose yourself. We are only doing our job, and your losing your temper won't help – it only pushes you toward dissonance. Now, do you have permission from a Servitor of Dominic, too?"

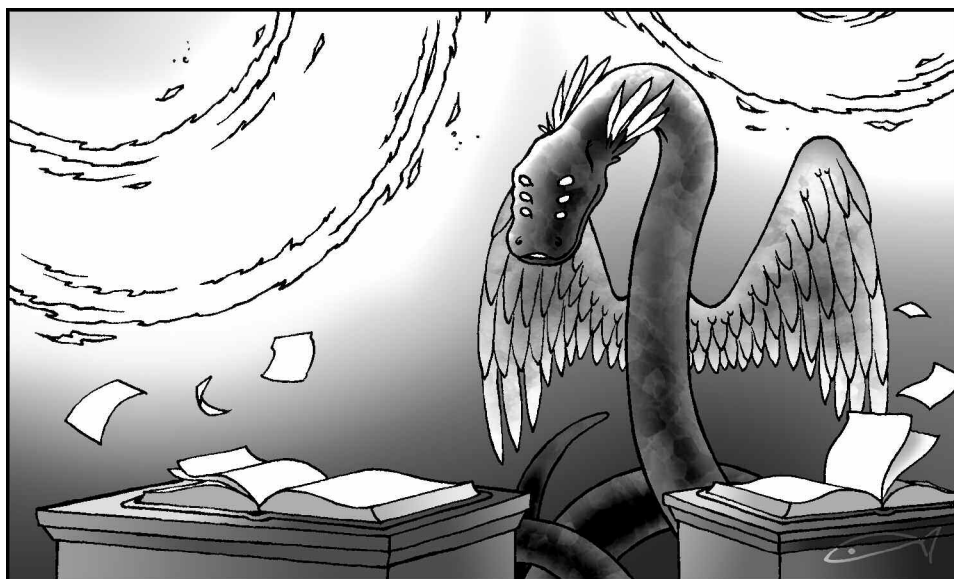
This bland and inoffensive-sounding department holds Dominican records on trials past and present, and theories on the future. There are files for most of the angels in Heaven – and a good number of the demons in Hell. They contain notes on their behavior and demonstrated heresies, reports from past triads who visited them on inquisition, and known occasions of dissonance or Discord. Naturally, these files can only be reviewed by angels with due reasons and authorization, as they should hardly be the subject of common gossip.

There are a great many rumors and theories about what is *really* kept in General Records, despite the assurances of Servitors of Judgment. Some angels believe that it houses evidence of Lucifer's original treachery, dating back to the Fall. Others claim that it has actual records on the heresies of Michael and other Archangels. Certainly the records of Michael's trial for the sin of pride are somewhere there . . . However, casual browsing out of mere curiosity is forbidden – much to the annoyance of many.

The Records themselves are stored beneath the Council Spires, under Dominic's Celestial Tribunal. The only known passages down to the entrance are via the Tribunal, though paranoid angels have suggested that there are secret entries to the Records from all Cathedrals. All the known passages down meet at the large entry office, which is permanently staffed by Seraphim, Elohim, and Malakim. As General Records does store information, it is naturally linked to Yves' Library. However, pathways between the two are rarely traceable, and certainly not from the Library to the Records! Angels who attempt to enter by stealth from the Library are punished if they are caught.

An angel wishing to access a particular file – or files – must present himself at the front desk, and give his name,

Choir, Superior, and authorization for accessing the file. Servitors of Dominic should only need to quote the name of the senior angel who gave them their current mission, to explain why they need a file that is (presumably) related to it. Servitors of *other* Archangels will need permission from a senior angel of Dominic and a reason for requiring access to the file. They may also need permission from a senior angel of their own Superior to be making an enquiry in the first place, depending on the subject. (A Servitor of Laurence, for instance, would probably be working under the orders of a commanding officer, whose name he should mention.)



The Seraph clerk will take this information down, resonating the inquirer for truth as he does so. (Servitors of other Archangels cite this as an example of the "insufferable paranoia" of Servitors of Dominic. The angels of Dominic themselves believe that such precautions are *necessary* with such important data.) An EloHITE clerk may also be called across to check the emotional state of the inquiring angel. If the EloHITE senses an unusual emotional state, the angel requesting information will be asked to explain himself. Should the answers be insufficient, or should the visitor attempt force (and break the Pax Dei – *Heaven and Hell*, p. 55), the Malakim present will subdue them.

Once a visitor has been authorized to enter, he will be shown to a private study, and must give the name of the file or files that he requires. The same Seraph clerk will take down the details, and one of the Ofanim on the staff will go and fetch the file, bringing it to the study where the visitor is waiting. There are several such studies, so that everyone visiting can read their chosen files in peace.



The visiting angel may not under *any* circumstances remove the file without permission from the desk – which is rarely granted. He may copy information from it, and is supplied with paper, pens, and computer scanners to do so if he wishes. However, it is frowned upon for angels to copy and remove information that isn't directly connected with whatever they're currently investigating. If they want "loose information," as the Records Ofanim put it, they should go and visit Yves' Library. When the visiting angel has finished with the file, he can exit from the room, leaving the file behind him on the table. It will be checked and returned by the Ofanite who assisted him earlier.

It should be noted that the Servitors of Dominic employed in General Records look upon their duty as *vital*ly important. They also consider themselves to be under the seal of the confessional, so to speak, regarding information discovered in the Records. Any Servitor found abusing his position by checking files in the Records will be removed from his position, and suffer Dominic's displeasure. Relievers are not assigned to the Records, as it is felt to be too senior a duty for them.

Iuridis, Malakite of Judgment, Head of the Records

Iuridis is as incorruptible as any Malakite, and has devoted himself to the upkeep and safety of the Records. Once a Servitor of Purity, he found haven in Dominic's

ranks after the Purity Crusade and the recall of Uriel. Conscious of the Ethereal blood on his hands and sword, he doubted his actions. This, for a Malakite, is a serious thing. He resolved to dedicate himself to something that he was *certain* of, and somewhere that needed him, where he wouldn't risk being mistaken again. In consequence, he's been attached to the Records for the last thousand years or so, and the Head of the Records for the last 300 years. He keeps the place in strict order, and regularly checks the other staff for any signs of corruption, or prurient investigation in the files. Of late, he's beginning to wonder if perhaps he's certain enough of his honor to return to Earth. He has spoken of this to some of the others who work in Records, all of whom have urged him to stay where he is for the moment.

Joshua, EloHITE Clerk

Joshua is one of the EloHITE clerks who serves on the outer desk in the entry office, assisting visiting angels with their requests. Due to an unshakable certainty that only Servitors of Judgment have the good sense and wisdom to be trusted with the data in the Records, he views all emotional displays with calm superiority. Visiting angels have been known to find this even more infuriating – however, he does his job thoroughly. If the visitors were so easily provoked, then possibly they were not in a reliable state to be allowed access to the Records. So far he has not been questioned on this behavior.

GROVES BASIC TRAINING

*The Cherub of War put his hands on his hips, and scowled at the five Mercurians of Flowers. "I'm not asking you to do anything **aggressive**, I'm simply asking you to hit that dummy there with this padded staff here. It'll develop vital hand-eye coordination and help you practice purely defensive moves. OK?"*

The Mercurians looked at each other. They weren't convinced.

Michael's opinion on the military state of Heaven is well known – it needs to be better. However, he can hardly go and forcibly drag angels belonging to other Superiors into martial arts and self-defense classes. (Some of his oldest angels have been known to reminisce about the days when he was Commander of the Hosts of Heaven, before that trial for the sin of pride . . .) Being intelligent, Michael has therefore adopted a different approach.

It is publicly known in Heaven that anybody who wants to learn about fighting from the very *best* – the Servitors of War – can come and do it in the Groves. Absolutely no permanent commitment is required, and all scruples on the part of trainees will be respected. Michael's servitors simply offer the service to people who need it or want it, in the hope that they will come to understand how *important* the Word of War is.

This public belief is not entirely accurate. While personal scruples will certainly be respected for at least a week, perhaps even two weeks, after that the new recruit will be expected to get out there and handle a weapon with the rest of them. Admittedly, after a couple of weeks of enthusiastic training (the Servitors of War *love* their work) most angels or blessed souls will be showing some interest and skill. Novalis – the Archangel who might be thought most likely to object to this – has merely commented that she expects her Servitors to be able to keep to their convictions. In view of this, there isn't much that other Archangels can protest about . . .

The area set aside for basic training of novices is on the edge of the main training grounds, and well away from the Duelling Ground. Michael doesn't want the new trainees scared away by overly violent displays. The angels of War who handle the new trainees are mostly Cherubim, with a scattering of Elohim. Their aim is to approach the visiting angels through some tactic that will make sense to them – stressing creativity in combat to a Servitor of Creation, protection of others to a Servitor of Flowers . . . Once the new trainee's attention has been caught, they are put through basic training in self-defense and started on more advanced lessons. They usually end up being assigned to another angel who can give them further tutoring or practice, often in a group of stu-

dents. They are also put in contact with the nearest convenient Tether of War on Earth, to practice their skills in the Corporeal realm.

Michael isn't trying to "poach" the Servitors of other Superiors. However, he does honestly feel that other angels need to be able to defend themselves, to *fight* – and he will take whatever steps he thinks are necessary to achieve this. Certainly there is a regular flow of angels coming to improve their skills in fighting, for both Heaven and Earth.



Merab, Cherub of War, Basic Instructor

Merab is a couple of hundred years old, and has done service on Earth and earned a number of scars there. His current job isn't a rest cure – it's a use of his talents at handling angels from other Words. Without actually lying, Merab is very effective at stressing the peace of mind that comes from knowing that an angel can handle himself in a fight and protect his friends. Appearing as a winged panther celestially, he's soft-voiced and gentle. Angels often come out of his classes demanding the opportunity to actually *fight* something.

THE MOVABLE PARADISE

The voice carried between the trees of the Groves. "No. I don't know where he is. I want you to tell me where he is so he can tell me where he put my sword!"

"Ob." The other voice sounded enlightened. "Just over thataway."

The group of angels nestling among the branches eyed each other, then began grabbing cushions, belongings, and food. "OK," whistled an Ofanite, "at this point we start running..."

Naturally, in an ideal Heaven, there is no such thing as theft or robbery. People don't break in to spray paint "Peace Now" signs on the favorite weapons of Servitors of Laurence, or decorate cherished Michaelite battle-axes with flowers. People don't try to enter the Dominican records secretly to investigate their own files and add scrawled comments. People don't "borrow" books from Yves' Library. People don't trade stolen property. And people most definitely don't meet clandestinely to plan this sort of thing.

And the place where absolutely *none* of this occurs is the Movable Paradise. It's a location that shifts around at the top of the Groves, a quiet little nook among the branches and winds. Most angels know that it exists, but only Servitors of Janus – with or without guests – are allowed to find their way there. The angels of Wind who watch for intruders don't actively *force* people away, but they will set up diversions and distractions while everyone currently in the Movable Paradise escapes. In such a situation, all current visitors to the Movable Paradise simply pick their belongings up, together with a few cushions and pieces of furniture, and rapidly relocate to elsewhere in the Groves.

Naturally, while such a place is entirely in keeping with the nature of Wind, it offends some Archangels (such as Dominic) by its very presence, and others by the actions of its inhabitants. This has resulted, in the past, in angry groups of angels coming to look for the Movable Paradise, to discuss some minor matter such as property going missing or other changes being inflicted. Such angry visitors – assuming they can conveniently enter the Groves (Servitors of Dominic occasionally have problems here) – have to *find* the Movable Paradise first. However, some Servitors of Wind will direct any questioners toward it, on the grounds that if its inhabitants have any ability whatsoever, they can handle the trouble.

The Movable Paradise is always somewhere up in the high branches of the Groves. It usually has a number of cushions, which are moved along with it, some refreshments, packs of cards, and sets of dice. Visitors bring along food and drink, but that's not the primary aspect of the place. The important thing is the risk, the thrill of the chase, and the enjoyment of change.

Generally speaking, a visiting soul or angel will have to be accompanied by a Servitor of Wind if the watchers are not to raise the alarm. Once actually *in* the Movable Paradise, everyone is accepted as an equal. Even Servitors of Dominic will be offered a part in the conversation, and an option on any ongoing deals – though they are unlikely to accept them. There are always at least a few blessed souls present, and those souls are given an equal share in discussion and planning.

Servitors of Wind don't automatically know where to find the place, although it sometimes looks that way to other angels. However, when the Movable Paradise settles down in a new spot in the branches, the angels guarding it mention it to the other nearby angels of Wind, who mention it to their friends . . . Within an hour or so, the message will be carried on the breezes, and most of the Servitors of Wind will have at least a vague idea of its location.

It is considered *bad form* for Servitors of Wind to spend too long in the Movable Paradise. To be there for a short while is perfectly reasonable, but to spend time just sitting there – where in that is the drive and energy which characterizes an angel of the Wind? Why, as their friends would put it, are

Wanted: a pair of dueling pistols, silver-chased, last seen in the possession of Quistad, Balseraph of the War, in New York. Any information appreciated.

Wanted: information on which wing of General Records they're keeping the file for Ximenes, EloHITE of Destiny.

For trade: white ballet tutu. Ideal for wearing to sword practice.

Wanted: workable plan to infiltrate the Glade with some decent disco music.

For trade: set of plain notebooks, ex-Dominican, currently blank. Someone take them off my hands, please – fast!

Wanted: assistance in anti-Beanie operation in Chicago, involving cement stuffing and repricing. Free cement to all who assist!

they not getting up and *causing* some change? This is so well-understood a principle, and so natural to the Servitors of Wind, that their friends rarely need to remind them of it. In consequence, there are new angels arriving and earlier angels leaving every hour, and while the population of the Movable Paradise fluctuates, there are usually only a couple of dozen there at any one time. Souls are not subject to this disapproval, but the sort of souls who *would* come there are unlikely to be staying in one place for long in any case.

While there is no actual person *in charge*, there is one soul who is almost always present. The soul is that of a boy, called Gavroche. He refuses to reveal his genuine identity (having taken the name from the street urchin in the novel *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo) but is known to have been in Heaven for at least 150 years now. Given his location, he rarely runs into Seraphim of Yves who might be able to genuinely identify him. Gavroche is known to most Servitors of Wind, and liked by all of them – even if his habit of picking pockets is annoying when applied to *them*. He enjoys listening to the discussions at the Movable Paradise, and will often offer a fragment of advice or suggestion.

Other Servitors of Wind, when they realize that the Movable Paradise is in the area, will often take a turn as guards. They reason that they may be in need of a similar service some day. Discussions at the Movable Paradise may be about operations on Earth, or ways to effect change in Heaven, or simply gossip about other angels. There is also a thriving trade in stolen goods – sometimes the Servitors of Trade can be so *picky*, it's nice to have more relaxed beings to barter with.

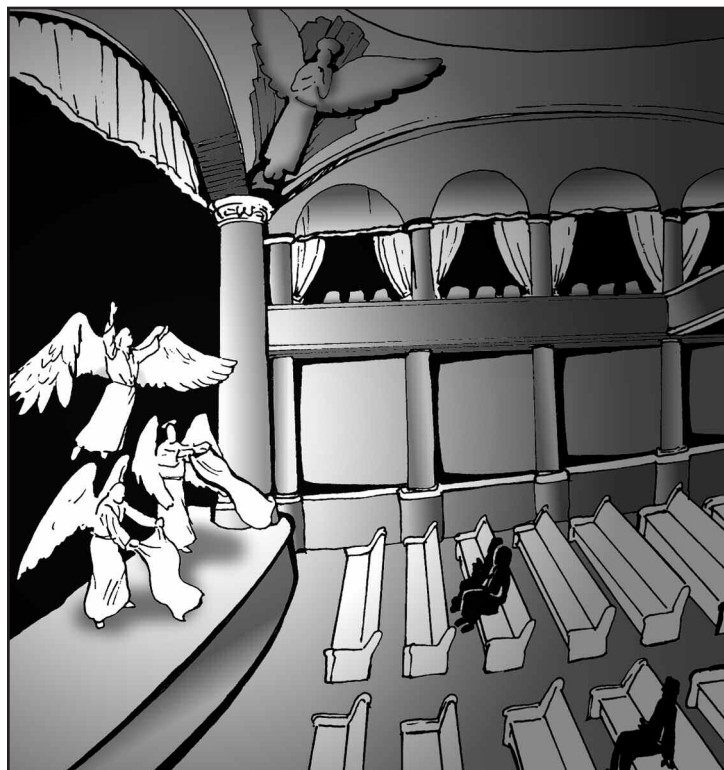
Gavroche, Blessed Soul

Gavroche, in his lifetime, had the name of Pierre Danton. He was the youngest child of a well-to-do family, and lived a very quiet life. He dreamed of adventure and excitement – and then, at eleven years old, he was caught in a riot, separated from his family, and trampled to death. When he reached Heaven, and discovered the Servitors of Wind, he realized that this was what he had always wanted. He *reinvented* himself, took the name of Gavroche after being read the story by a kindly Servitor of Destiny, and never mentioned his previous life. He spent time among the Servitors of Wind, listening to their conversations, until he could talk intelligently about change and theft and wild escapes. Nobody looks twice at him these days, and he is entirely accepted for what he claims to be. Sometimes he wonders exactly what he may have lost, however, and what happened to the rest of his family . . .

THE PASSION PLAY

The two blessed souls sat at the back of the empty auditorium, watching the stage where the angels moved in regular patterns, masked to denote character.

"It's very pretty," one murmured to the other, "but is it art?"



Creation, or so say Eli's angels, never stops. It continues eternally and ineffably, and the very moment of the creation of the universe and the creation of Heaven and Earth are still in a sense *continuing*. That instant of creation never ceases, for as long as the Word of Creation exists.

Of course, some people say that if it should stop, then Eli would also cease, blown out like a candle – but nobody really believes that.

In one of the theaters in the Halls of Creation there is a continuing performance that has been going on for thousands of years, since the Fall of Lucifer. It is, quite simply, a retelling of the Creation itself, from the first moments up to the Fall. When it ends, it is begun again. Although the actors may be performing to a completely empty auditorium, it continues. It may be performed in any of a thousand different ways – mime, song, dance, mosaic, living collage, masquerade, epic poetry recital – but it continues. Even if only one angel is left on his own to repeat the piece again and again, he will do so until somebody relieves him, and won't let it stop.

Blessed souls are allowed to take part as well. They're even welcomed, as fewer and fewer angels choose to devote their time to the performance. Some celestials point to Eli's disappearance as the moment when his angels began to lose their commitment to the performance. Others say that the angels in question have simply realized that they can be more *useful* on Earth, and that they have the right to make that decision.

The theatre is a work of art in itself, with walls and ceiling like mother of pearl, an infinite number of seats, and thousands of backdrops saved from previous performances. Each time a new performance takes place, old props and backdrops are kept to be reused again where necessary. The current backdrop is one woven from as many angel feathers as the artists could obtain, and glows like a dark opal. In front of it the artists speak blank verse composed impromptu, recreating the moments from the Creation to the Fall – and then beginning again.

Sometimes a performance can only last an hour – like the time when each actor was only allowed to speak a single word, which was supposed to sum up his entire viewpoint. Sometimes it can last for years. More often it lasts for weeks, and then must be begun again in a different style. There is no rehearsal, and there are no breaks. The style for the new performance is discussed as the old one draws to a close, and then it begins impromptu, often with stage materials being gathered as the performance continues. The current organizer, or director, is Genetrice, a Kyriotate of Creation. She is growing steadily more worried about the decline of interest in the performance, and is trying to think of ways to recruit new performers – even from other Superiors.

Genetrice, Kyriotate of Creation, Director

Genetrice has been managing the performance for 400 years now, and is beginning to get – not bored, but a little blase. She won't leave the duty without having handed it on to someone else competent, however. In the meantime, she needs to find more angels to take part in it. Even short appearances, "bit parts," would be enough, as long as it keeps on going. (She doesn't confess her private, probably heretical, belief that if the performance ever stopped, then Eli himself would feel it as a mortal pain.)

QUIET WILLOWS

"Why should she want company?" the Seraph asked quietly. "What she needs to do now is weep. I know that you Servitors of the Sword are strong, and virtuous, and pure, but even the greatest heart sometimes needs to lay aside his weapon and mourn."

The Glade of Novalis is a center of music and joy, in Heaven. Blessed souls and angels rejoice in the spirit of loving kindness which permeates the area, and celebrate the glory of God together, in song and dance and simple happiness. It resonates with the universal Symphony and the Word of Novalis, echoing throughout her Cathedral of plants.

And then again, there are parts of it that are quiet, undisturbed by the laughter of others. There people rest in a deep green silence, protected by the plants around them, with nearby angels and souls to calm and reassure them. It is a place of peace, where any fighting or argument is absolutely forbidden. It is commonly called Quiet Willows.





Some say that Novalis sat in this place after the Fall, weeping for her brothers and sisters lost to Hell, and that her tears formed the river that flows through it. Certainly it is one of the oldest parts of the Glade. No particular angel is in charge of the place – those who come there are in agreement that it must remain quiet, and keep it so. Angels who have no business there are asked to wait outside the area's boundaries – if they try to force their way in, the very trees and plants rise up against them and bar them from the place.

Quiet Willows is a place for the weary who wish to mourn. Souls from across Heaven find their way there, as do angels from many different Words. They can rest by the river which flows among the willow trees, and stay in the silence until they have wept enough and reached a measure of peace. Novalis understands that there are times when grief must be expressed to be understood and healed, and she herself still mourns there sometimes for the marring of Heaven and of the world. When the grief has passed, an angel or soul can return to his duties; after winter, spring, and after pain, new growth.

One of the groups that frequent Quiet Willows has taken a private mission on itself. A collection of blessed souls and angels from all Choirs, they have decided to plant cuttings and seeds from the trees and bushes there through all of Heaven. While they have not told Novalis of their plan, they hope that the peace and sorrow which permeate Quiet Willows will follow where its trees grow. If other angels can understand and express their grief, then they can also move past it, and enter a new spring of growth. For the moment, they are working by stealth, not wanting to bring the matter into the public eye. Each of them is quite sure that Novalis would *surely* approve, but none of them feel quite inclined to ask her, much less any other Archangel.

Derdeke, Mercurian of Novalis, Planter of Seeds

Derdeke has seen too many beings, both human and celestial, who refused to admit to their grief and were consumed by it. She believes that a spirit who truly knows himself is strongest – it would be difficult for a Seraph to disagree with her there – and that this includes the knowledge of one's grief. Pale-haired and pale-winged, she has recently returned from an assignment on Earth in Brazil. She is continuing her hobby of wandering around Heaven and planting seeds, explaining her presence in different Cathedrals as due to a wish to better understand the Word of the place. Which is, in a way, true – she wishes to understand it, and wishes to help those there better understand themselves.

THE REMEMBRANCES OF HOLY FEAR

The young Seraph turned to look down the curiously translucent corridor. A flame caught his attention for a moment, the swift movements of an Ofanite reflected briefly as she swept by.

"Who are you?" he called. There was no reply. He gave pursuit.

When Beleth was an angel, she held the Word of Fear, and used it for the good of mankind. Hers was the fear that kept living things away from danger, and the fear *for others* that impelled a mother to save a child, or a friend to defend a friend. She lived with Blandine, in the tower that Blandine still inhabits, and the substance of both their natures was woven into its walls.

Beleth has long since left Blandine's tower for her own, and dwells among Nightmares. But there is still something of holy fear lingering in the Tower of Dreams, and there are still parts of it that resonate to the Word which Beleth held.

Among the pale corridors of Blandine's Tower, it is possible to come across a corridor that is entirely clear crystal, having no color in it whatsoever. Such corridors are unlit and contain no Hearts, and are out of the way of general traffic. In little niches at points throughout the corridors are scattered shards of crystal, tiny and perfect. A wise angel might guess that they are the remains of broken Hearts. He'd be right. They were the Hearts of Servitors of Fear, who Fell with Beleth.

If an angel deliberately attempts to leave the corridor, he can. It won't be there when he turns around – he'll only find the usual pearly rooms of Blandine's Tower. If he continues to the end of the corridor, he'll emerge somewhere else in Blandine's Tower, safe and untouched. And he might meet Accidie, if she is passing through.

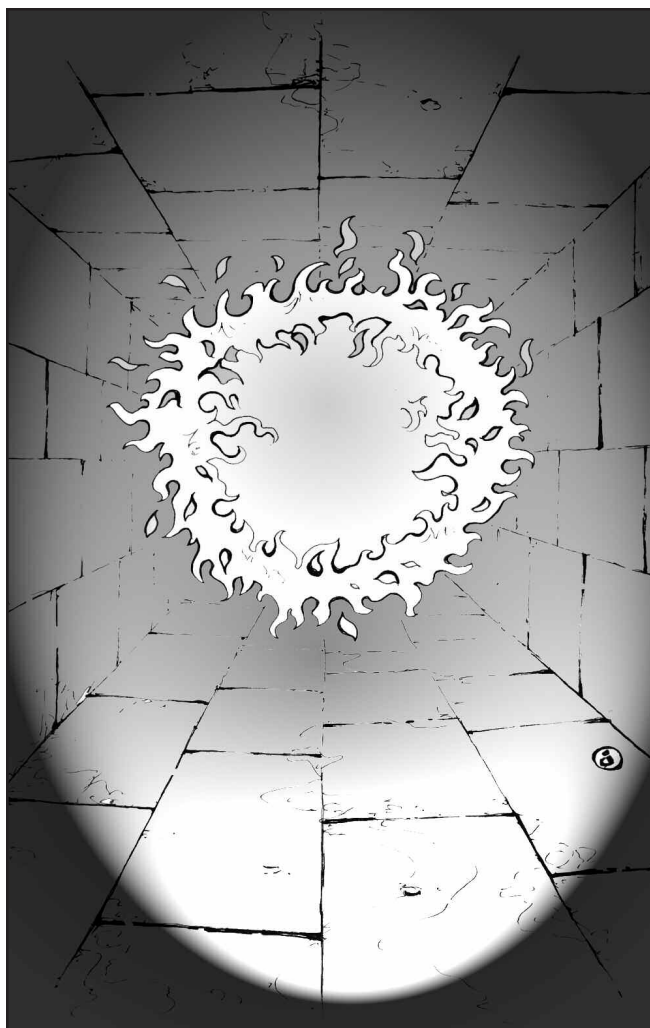
If an angel tries to touch or otherwise interfere with the fragments of the broken Hearts, he will have a brief vision. It will usually be of some place or person which the angel who once owned the Heart cared for, and which he *feared* for. The vision may remind the viewer about the *necessity* of fearing for the safety of others, in order to better protect them. It will only last a second, and is no more than a glimpse of sound and image.

A few – a very few – of the Hearts have images locked in them of the fear of God, that holy fear which makes both angels and humans fall down in worship and cover their eyes. Such images cannot be described in words. They are a single pulse of emotion, one which leaves the angel who touched the Heart on their knees and trembling.

Accidie, Ofanite of Dreams, Guardian of the Remembrances

Accidie is an Ofanite of Dreams who spends her entire life moving among the Remembrances, never ceasing. Once, before the Fall, she was a Servitor of Fear. She adored her mistress utterly, and when Beleth Fell, her sanity shattered. Blandine healed her as best she could, but could not repair a fundamental flaw in her mind.

Accidie is *utterly* convinced that Beleth is still an angel. She finds excuses as to why she never sees her, and contents herself by moving through the corridors and dark passages, waiting, always waiting, certain that Beleth will return soon. Servitors of Dream who have encountered her know of this delusion, and feel that it would be too cruel to her to destroy it. She does not meet other angels often, in any case, as few wander among the Remembrances. If someone should try to confront her with the truth, she would flee, and remain withdrawn for years before she could convince herself that it was a lie.



THE ROOM OF CONTEMPLATION

The voices echoed down the passageway. "Are you sure this is where he is?"

"Yes, that's what they said." A pause, and the shadows of wings fluttered on the tunnel wall. "Are you sure this is the right way?"

"Yes . . . Oh." There was a pause, as the two young Cherubim blinked about them at the cavern.

A pale-skinned Elohibite moved to bar their way, preventing them from going further in. "This is a place of contemplation. None of my brothers who come here leaves until he has finished his meditation."

Beneath the Groves lie the Caverns of David, which by their nature contain secrets and hidden things. Among the caves and passages is one room set aside for contemplation.

The room is lit by a single shaft of light, directed down from the surface through a twisting tunnel of quartz. It is a large room – perhaps infinitely large – although it always seems small to those in it. The walls and floor, of smooth gray marble, are regularly lined with niches of a size to hold an angel. Some of these are covered over, and some are empty but have their lids lying beside them. A few are not only covered over, but sealed with David's sigil.

When angels of David feel a need for penance or contemplation that cannot be answered in more vigorous ways, they are free to come to this room. They choose a niche, and are walled up in it – either until they wish to leave, or for some period of time agreed with the keepers of the room.

Inside a niche, there is nothing but silence and darkness, and the texture of stone all around the angel, and



the consciousness of being *inside* the bedrock of Heaven. For some angels, this is enough, and they come out of their niches strengthened in purpose. Other angels find themselves forced to meditate on their own sins, and may emerge in worse state than when they entered. It should be noted that entering the niches is always a *voluntary* choice – it is never imposed as a punishment, not even by David himself. The sealed niches hold angels who chose to wait till Judgment Day; they felt their own sins were so grievous that they could not trust themselves to choose to leave.

Angels of other Superiors are politely turned away if they ask to be subjected to this form of contemplation. If they become persistent, then the Caverns grow more confusing, and it is impossible to find the room in question. If they merely want to talk to someone who is in a niche, however, then they are allowed to wait nearby by Jezoar, an EloHITE who monitors the room. It is a good idea to ask how long the person in question intends to remain in contemplation before sitting down to wait.

Jezoar, EloHITE of Stone, Monitor of the Room

Jezoar has been keeper of the room for three hundred years now, replacing the previous guardian (whose whereabouts are unknown, but who is thought to be somewhere in the Sahara.) He is experienced at putting off enthusiastic young angels from other Superiors who think that being walled up is some sort of demonstration of personal strength. To the Servitors of David, it is nothing of the sort – it is a rite, and a reaffirmation of their ties to Stone. When not talking to visitors or those who have come to contemplate, he sits among the niches, watching the light, and listening to the silence.

THE VANISHING ROOMS

There was nothing but fire outside the arched stone windows, flickering against the leaded glass panes. The Mercurian's wings beat in agitation as he pressed his hands against the wall, checking for some sort of passage or way out.

He paused, turning to look out of the window. A figure moved in the fire, pouring burning coals between her hands like water, and a voice spoke to him, hissing thunder in his ears.

In Gabriel's Volcano, rooms are disappearing. Sometimes angels vanish with them.

Archangels have a strong relationship to their Cathedrals. Given Gabriel's state of psychosis, her Cathedral fluctuates with her. From time to time pieces of it vanish, to match the state of her sanity. Her angels do not speak of this to others, but they are growing concerned. Soldekai, the Chamberlain of the Legions of Flame (*The Marches*, p. 20) has set one of Gabriel's Seraphim, Pinon, to try and analyze the missing rooms and see whether there is some pattern to the vanishings. Pinon's best theory so far is that the disappearances conform to divine inspiration – which Soldekai finds less than useful.



Usually it is a minor room or corridor which vanishes. It doesn't happen to particular rooms belonging to angels or souls. Possibly their attachment to their *own* room causes those rooms to be more resistant to the effects, and further from the pure Cathedral of Gabriel.



When a room is taken, nothing *seems* to change at first. If anybody tries to open the doors or look out through windows, they find that there is only pure, blinding fire outside. The fire might be the living substance of Gabriel in some form, as though the room had passed into her very essence – nobody is sure. The walls of the room lose all heat, as though it were drawn into the fires outside, and are bone-chilling to the touch. Inspiration and thought seem to drain out of the room, leaving those inside with little volition to do anything or to seek to leave. In the flames outside, images form, playing out scenes that might be prophecies or memories.

People caught inside a room when it vanishes have two choices; they can either stay in the room and hope that it will reappear in the Volcano, or they can jump into the fire outside. If they choose to stay and wait – and the longer they hesitate, the easier this becomes, as they lose volition – then the room will eventually reappear, somewhere else in the Volcano.

If, on the other hand, they choose to leave the room and enter the fires outside, they will pass through a state of visions and images. Angels who have been in these flames find it difficult to recall a precise sequence of events – just scattered words or pictures. They emerge, some unspecified time later, at a Tether of Fire on Earth, disoriented and confused.

Pinon, Seraph of Fire, Researcher

Pinon is a respected Seraph of Fire, who earned the Seraph of Lightning attunement from Jean long ago. In Soldekai's eyes, he seemed a perfect candidate to analyze the vanishings for a pattern. Pinon himself is wishing that he'd never heard of the whole matter. The entire concept seems to him perilously close to saying openly that his Archangel *is* mentally unstable – a topic which, like any good Servitor of Fire, he vehemently avoids. He also has a private fear of being caught in a vanishing himself, which he does his best to conceal. He collates reports of the vanishings in his study, but has yet to track any pattern to them at all. However, as the best authority available, angels have started asking him for predictions about where they may next occur.

THE WALLS OF NAMES

With a swirl of pale wings, the Mercurian of the Sword turned to place a candle in the dark wrought-iron stand. "This is for Jason," he said to the Elobite of Flowers beside him.

Just as Laurence claims patronage of all the Soldiers of God, so he also remembers them after their death. In Heaven there is an abiding monument to all those who served knowingly and bound themselves to Heaven; one that can humble angels. After all, angels *know*, but mortals must have faith, and those who were Soldiers gave their lives for that faith.

Many people who are not Soldiers of God serve the cause of Heaven, and souls who never even knew about the War enter Heaven's gates every day. However, Laurence has a special place in his heart for those humans who were brave enough, *honorable* enough



to know about the War and to dare to fight in it. In the Cathedral of the Sword is a side-chapel carved of the same dark stone as the rest of the building, whose walls are engraved with countless names. Each name is picked out in perfect script, and is legible to anybody who tries to read it. Though the names are never seen to move, if a visitor is looking for a particular name, then he will find it, at whichever point he looks on the wall. The chapel itself is unornamented, and the glass in the window above the plain altar is clear – possibly the only window in the entire Cathedral not of stained glass.

There is always a Cherub on “honor guard” duty at the chapel, to assist visitors and to deal with any problems that may arise. (Such Cherubim are chosen from those Servitors of the Sword most able to cope with human emotions, as often visitors to the chapel need consolation and support.) Both angels and blessed souls visit the chapel. They do not come to look for their own names, but to find the names of others who may have gone on into the Higher Heavens, or to be assured that the sacrifice of friends is remembered.

Some angels feel that Laurence shouldn't have this memorial solely within *his* Cathedral. They also query its location in such a Catholic-themed Cathedral, when many Soldiers belonged to other religions, or were even agnostic. (For obvious reasons, Soldiers won't be atheists.) On the other hand, no blessed soul has ever complained, perhaps feeling that the true sense of sanctity in the place goes beyond the boundaries of religion.

It is a practice among angels of the Sword to light a candle in this chapel for any Soldier who has died while serving with them, and to pray for the Soldier's soul. Wrought-silver stands are constantly full of burning candles, tended by the Cherub watching the chapel. There is also a single stand of dark iron, in which Servitors of the Sword light candles for Soldiers who are lost to them. These are the Soldiers tempted and destroyed by Hell, and their names do not appear on the wall – but even so, the angels of the Sword still pray for them.

Yrian, Cherub of the Sword, Chapel Guardian

Yrian is one of the Cherubim who regularly guards the chapel. He is used to explaining its nature (and the nature of the candle-stands) to souls and to angels from other Words. He always wears his sword – even if he has never yet had cause to draw it here, principles are principles. Yrian occasionally leaves the chapel unattended while taking care of child-souls who came to visit and to see the names of people who they knew on the wall. This has not been a problem so far.

HELL



BANG BANG ALL SAME HARDWARE SHOP

The Habbalite's eyes narrowed, and he turned to root through the pile of wrenches next to him. "Three-eighths Gripsey, right. Let me guess. It's for a rack?"

The Impudite looked surprised. "Yes! How did you know?"

The other demon sighed. "Look, kid, everyone wants to build a rack. It's one of those, what do you call it, stages you go through."

Even in Shal-Mari, purveyor of vices to the whole of Hell, there is a need for *practical* shops. Somewhere that an enthusiastic demon can get electric drills, lengths of chain, uncut lumber, gags, rawhide, and duct tape. Somewhere that demons from all Superiors can go to to purchase the raw materials for constructing their own racks, cooking ranges, and mayhem.

Somewhere like the Bang Bang All Same Hardware Shop.

A regular thudding came from inside the shop, perceptible even through the din of the Shal-Mari street.

"What's going on in there?" asked a tense-looking Habbalite. Wide swathes of chain ornamented his skin, dark against its pallor.

The nearest soul cowered. "They say that Shaashgaz got hold of a pneumatic drill, master. They say there's a whole mob of people wanting to use it, master."

The Habbalite frowned. "On the damned souls?"

The soul shook his head. "Oh no, master. On equipment. You can get damned souls anywhere."

Nobody is quite sure when the Shop opened. It's just one of those little establishments that "always seems to have been there." It's run by Shaashgaz, a burned-out Habbalite of Kobal who ran out of energy for work on Earth and is now profoundly nihilistic. He has a few imps who keep the piles of stock in order for him, and polish his inset D-rings. They serve for the occasional crumb of Essence, and the hopes of pleasing customers and finding a place with them.

The shop has a narrow doorway on the street, which opens into a corridor. The corridor is stacked high on either side with gadgets and supplies, so that large-winged or bulky demons have to edge their way through carefully. The main area of the shop is lit by dangling unshielded light bulbs, with an empty area in the center that leads to Shaashgaz's desk. Goods are piled in drifts of wood, metal, and leather, tumbled up against the walls. Shaashgaz keeps the stuff confused so that nobody will be easily able to steal valuable equipment – he knows, himself, where to find particular items.

Shaashgaz prefers payment in Essence, but often ends up taking it in trade goods. These can be raw material for later resale, or old tools that he can recondition. He *will* refuse payment in services – which is the usual offer of Servitors of Lust. (After all, one can hardly resell those.) His goods are mostly second-hand, though there's occasionally the odd new tool or pair of handcuffs or gun. He knows that he's never going to be powerful,

or wealthy, or patronized by Princes. He contents himself with making a comfortable living, with a regular clientele. Occasionally he even sells goods to *damned souls*, if they can afford it – someone who can be damned to Hell and still try and make something of himself can't be entirely weak.

Shaashgaz, Proprietor of the Shop

Shaashgaz became disillusioned by his work on Earth. Despite his best efforts, his *best* humiliations, the humans didn't notice it. They kept on breeding like rats, squirming across the face of the Earth, actually *laughing* at themselves. He gave up. Far better to run a quiet little business in Hell, where at least people knew that they were damned and didn't pretend that they had a chance of happiness. His mutilations consist of D-rings set along his cheekbones, collarbone, and down the inside of his arms – they're kept carefully oiled, though he's otherwise greasy and dirty from his work. His whole attitude is that of someone who just doesn't *care* any more. He'll serve customers dutifully enough, and go to some effort hunting through the store to find the goods they want, but is profoundly world-weary about the whole business. The exception is when someone actually tries to get out without paying. In that case, he'll display a genuine fury, and do his best to capture them – then display them outside the shop for a few days as an example of the shop's bondage goods.



BRACELET BODYGUARDS

The Lilim looked her Sister up and down. "So. You've taken a temporary job in Sheol, working on the accounting side, and you're feeling . . . endangered. How very sensible of you. Fortunately," she flicked through her notebook, "I've got a Calabite there who owes me a day's worth of bodyguarding. Shall we talk terms?"

Lilim are hungry for Geases on others – it's part of their Band's character. However, while they're always glad to do a minor favor, they don't always have an immediate use for the Geas. At the end of the 19th century, an enterprising Lilim named Marguerida developed a way for her Sisters to make a quick and easy profit off their Geases. Setting up shop just outside the Guildhall, she began trading services and Essence in hand. This was in return for the holders of the Geases invoking them on the subjects to act as bodyguards – on a specified occasion, for a specified person.

Marguerida is very aware of what would happen to her if she should be thought to be treasonous, or undermining the authority of Princes. She has taken great care to keep her operation low-key, and not to invoke Geases on Servitors who are currently working on their Prince's orders. However, if one of those Servitors is currently relaxing or unemployed, she'll gladly call them up to fulfill their Geas.

The office of Bracelet Bodyguards is a few streets away from the Guildhall, with gaudy posters hanging outside advertising their services. Marguerida acts as sole secretary and manager to the whole business, with a couple of gremlins to keep the files. It's not profitable enough yet for her to employ more powerful demons, and she isn't going to *waste* a Geas for service if it could be put to better use elsewhere.

The premises are extremely small; a waiting-room, an office, and a couple of shabby bedrooms upstairs. (Marguerida isn't going to waste good Essence or credit on expensive furnishings.) Clients are seen as rapidly as possible, shown into the office by one of the gremlins.

Clients are generally one of two sorts – a Lilim looking to sell off a Geas on someone for short-term gain, or someone (quite often a Lilim, again) needing a bodyguard. To a Lilim hoping to dispose of a Geas, Marguerida can offer Essence, information, trade goods (she has some Geases on local merchants) or maybe a Geas on someone else. From someone looking for a bodyguard, she'll take Essence, relics or reliquaries, useful information, or a Geas on them personally.

"A bodyguard?" Marguerida said thoughtfully. "Well, it's been done before . . . but of course it'll cost you." She considered the drawn face of the Habbalite. *Desperate. I like it when they're desperate.*

The Habbalite nodded jerkily. "I'm going out into the Marches. I could use some muscle."

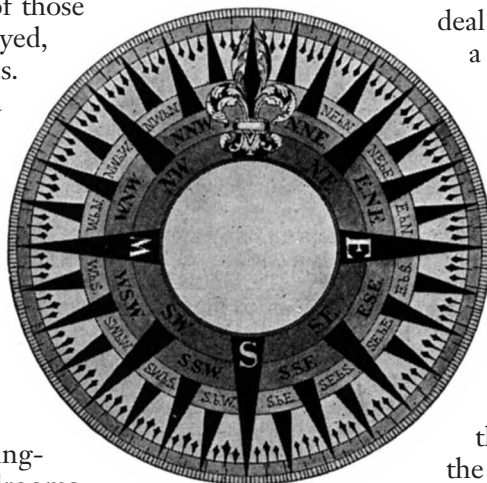
The Lilim pulled some papers from a drawer. "Let's be businesslike. Name?"

"Ximenes," her customer replied reluctantly. "Look, is all this actually necessary?"

Marguerida put the pen down, and folded her arms. "I'm a professional – I like to do things properly. But don't worry, you'll get what you pay for."

The mechanics of the deal are quite straightforward. The Lilim who holds the Geas invokes it on the target, with the wording of, "Act as bodyguard, for a period of (however many) days, on the person who Marguerida stipulates, when she stipulates." Marguerida later contacts the person in question, and tells them

whom they're to bodyguard. The deal is generally only for a day or a week – if Marguerida had stronger Geases to use, she'd find a more effective way of using them! The people who are actually being geased into acting as bodyguards usually find the situation bearable, as Marguerida takes care not to make them act against their Prince. At least this way they know the Geas is out of the way.



Marguerida, Manager of Bracelet Bodyguards

Marguerida is almost a stereotypical Lilim, in that she looks at everything in terms of profit and loss. To her, the smallest gain is gain and a step closer to freedom – even, maybe, the coronet of a Princess! – and the smallest loss is the approach to absolute penury, ruin, and slavery. This makes her subordinates terrified of announcing any difficulties to her. Her emotional roller-coasters have to be seen to be believed. She's always as sweet as sugar to her clients, however, and will grovel suitably to anybody threatening of high rank.

BULLETIN BOARDS

"Actually," the Habbalite said as the crowd seethed around them, "I rather think I've got the answer to that bivalency question. It's just a matter of a few extra isotopes." He showed his teeth in a smirk.

The Impudite grinned back, eyeing him narrowly. Can I trust this? he thought. It could be another false trail, but if it's really the isotopes that are key to it, then I can have a full report and credit on the Prince's desk by tomorrow evening . . .

Tartarus is a difficult place for young and vigorous demons. The various departments and developmental laboratories, ultimately headed (naturally) by their Prince, have senior demons firmly ensconced at the top. Those demons remember their own rise to power, and take care to keep junior demons in their place. Some Servitors find Earth a useful path to prove themselves, but others hope to rise through their dedication and studies in Tartarus itself. This, as they say, takes some doing.

Young Vapulan scientists need to produce inventions – new, startling, dazzling, ground-breaking inventions – and to take the credit for them. (Many aspiring young geniuses have seen the directors of their laboratories walk off with all the praise.) While it's not hard to join up as a junior tester or bottle-washer on a project, it's very difficult to be able to devote time and resources to your *own* research. Doubly so if you don't have a reputation or any credits to your name. And, of course, you need to *have* a project that'll catch the attention. To deal with this problem, many junior demons resort to the tried-and-tested tactic of plagiarism.

Plagiarism in Tartarus takes many forms. It can involve spying on the notes of a demon's superior, or sneaking through defenses to watch other people's experiments. However, a great deal of it involves talking with fellow demons to try and pry their secrets out of them – and that often happens at Bulletin Boards.

Bulletin Boards is variously described as a collegium, an open laboratory, a discussion forum, and a



place to try one's latest theories on human subjects. It is an Escher-like hall of twisted metal, with stairways entering it from half a dozen different directions. Demons walk on the ceiling and walls as well as on the floor, due to local fluctuations in the law of gravity. Pens and paper are available everywhere, to scribe down the theory of the moment. Huge computer screens flicker throughout, set into the walls and ceiling. Souls are chained to posts throughout the room, for easy demonstrations. The place pulsates with a constant restrained hubbub, and only a few nexi of silence mark the locations of senior demons, surrounded by adoring students and groupies. (It's astonishing how the scent of power attracts admirers . . .)

Naturally, every demon present is listening for exploitable suggestions. A casual remark can be the clue to some other demon's current course of research, which can then be spied on, plagiarized, stolen, and presented as one's own work. Of course, a demon must be careful that the research isn't then stolen back from *him*, but these are the risks that one must take for greatness.

It might be assumed that under these conditions, nobody would mention their research at all. On the contrary – Bulletin Boards is one of *the* places to brag about one's newest projects and attempt to recruit useful minions and coworkers. To be there and not talking about some new piece of work implies that the demon doesn't have something currently on the boil. In Tartarus, this can be the kiss of death, as rumors about projects are nearly as important as the actual results. If a Servitor of Vapula should ever admit to ignorance or lack of inspiration, then the next logical step for his career is as test subject . . . which makes the young demons even more desperate to find ideas.

Entrance to Bulletin Boards is free to anybody – except, of course, the humble damned souls. Demons from other Principalities are welcome to visit if they want, but generally they find the conversation rather boring. The odd exception, such as a Servitor of the War in search of the latest military technology, or a Servitor of the Game looking for new interrogation devices, prompts great interest. Some demons wish to show off their latest ideas to the visitors, while everyone else is trying to find out what those ideas *are*. The visitors themselves will be snubbed by those Vapulan demons who wish to show how devoted to pure science they are, and fawned upon by others hoping to make a name for themselves.

Bulletin Boards has been in existence since shortly after Vapula became a Prince. He established the hall himself, though it was somewhat smaller then. At the

time, he explained his wish to see younger demons rise as he had done, through learned intercourse with their fellows. Almost instantly the place became the hive of backbiting, plagiarism, and occasional assassination that it is today – truly an example to demons throughout Tartarus. It was originally named for the listings of new experiments that were posted on the walls. Naturally, such listings are now on the vast computer screens that cover tracts of floor and ceiling, flashing with constant changes and updates.

Certain actions – those obviously lethal to everyone present – *are* forbidden while inside Bulletin Boards. While there are no guards or security staff around, having a large mass of young Vapulan scientists descending upon offenders tends to be crudely effective. (Small-scale experiments on local bystanders are, of course, entirely normal procedure.) The last known demon to contravene this unwritten rule, 40 years ago, was Peritus, a Balseraph of Technology with certain theories about the creation of black holes. The scientific debate (and demonstration) about this resulted in 50 demonic fatalities. Peritus currently spins in a gravitic anomaly at the center of Bulletin Boards, insane, wingless, tongueless, and blinded. He is a frequent test subject for neural networks and voice reproduction, and will be happy to talk to anybody nearby – for the duration of the current experiment.

Peritus, Balseraph of Technology, Experimental Victim

Peritus still has all the pride that led him to try to generate a black hole in the middle of a crowd of 200 other Servitors of Vapula. (He maintains that if he'd been allowed to finish the experiment, it'd have gained him a Barony at *least*.) He looks like a wingless gray-white worm, its body implanted with rusting circuitry. Hanging in a carefully created bubble of zero gravity, he's unable to maneuver himself, or see, or speak. This gives him a great deal of time to work on scientific theory. When people communicate with him, he tries to explain his latest concept to them. He's persuasive, friendly, and hopes to some day talk his way out of his prison – he is also totally psychotic and murderous, though he's good at hiding it. Failing that, he'd just like to know that his theories were being worked on. So far, nobody

has actually put his concept of “generation of power through controlled stellar implosion” into practice, but some desperate junior Vapulans are considering it . . .



BUNKER 666

The new troop of demons filed into the mess hall, double-quick time, then paused to look around. On one wall was a huge bulletin board covered with lists – closer inspection showed that the papers were awaiting the names of volunteers for tests.

“Hey, Sarge,” asked an enthusiastic Calabite, “can we do the Mecha ones? Nobody else has signed up for that one yet . . .”

“Yeah,” muttered the Impudite next to him. “Wonder why.”

Baal has appreciated Vapula’s work for a long time (while obligingly ignoring certain minor delusions of angelhood.) The two Princes have a fruitful association in the area of weapons science – although Baal also takes an interest in other scientific matters that may affect the War. Needless to say, all Servitors of the War appreciate having the latest reliable and effective technology with which to destroy the enemy.

It’s a great pity that the new devices produced by Vapula are rarely reliable or totally effective. Beta-testing is a delusion for the weak, after all, and safety reports find a use in many Vapulan laboratories in wiping up coffee spills. Given that all Servitors of Technology are driven to produce and publish – or perish – it’s surprising that as much workable stuff comes out of Tartarus as it does.



Realizing that this is the case, Baal established Bunker 666. (Sometimes demons have less originality than at other times – even Demon Princes.) Its aim is to test some of the latest devices from Tartarus, and get more accurate reports on them than their inventors give. Being sent to serve in Bunker 666 is *not* a reward for good behavior – it’s a punishment duty, with heavy casualties. The demons who serve there know that if field-testing on Earth shows that a device operates worse than they have reported, they will be punished. They also realize that reporting too many test devices as malfunctioning draws the attention of senior Servitors of Vapula, or Vapula himself.

Bunker 666 is on the edge of Gehenna, near Tartarus (though not actually on the border.) It’s a low concrete and steel construction, flat and ungainly, certified proof against anything up to and including nuclear weaponry, surrounded by a *wide* zone of destruction from tests. There is a regular garrison of 100 Servitors of Baal, and a few Servitors of Vapula, on permanent detached duty to watch the tests. (Oddly enough, these Servitors of Vapula

The Impudite secretary perched on the edge of the desk, and read from the papers in her hands. “Test 2A on the rocket-glider, 3 fatalities, marked as reaching passable standard by Observer Hikachu, sir.”

The Djinn sitting behind the desk grunted, “Pass it and get it out of here.”

She checked another list. “Three attempted desertions, currently in the cells, corridor C5, sir.”

“To be shot at dawn,” the Djinn rumbled.

“And one attempt to falsify records on the Superstring Project, sir.”

The Djinn shot to its back pair of feet, towering over her. “The *scum!* They’ll pay for this! I want a full report! I want them here in front of me in chains! How *dare* they touch my records . . .”

actually *enjoy* their postings. They’re chosen from demons who don’t have work currently being tested, to avoid bias, and they *love* criticizing the work of their fellow Servitors.)

The garrison is commanded by Ibri, a Djinn of the War and a Captain of the Infernal Armies. It can be split into two main groups – the more experienced demons, who are desperately trying to arrange a transfer *anywhere* else, and the recently arrived demons, who haven’t realized their full misfortune yet. The transition from the second group to the first usually happens during the first major testing session that newcomers are involved in. Fortunately, a certain amount of on-the-job casualties are expected by Baal.

Ibri, Djinn of the War, Commandant of Bunker 666

Ibri knows that this is a dead-end posting, and that he’s unlikely ever to get transferred elsewhere. However, here he has reports to guard and care for and a position that nobody’s going to backstab him for, and he doesn’t have to fight on the front lines. All in all, things could be worse. He’s therefore moderately lenient with his troops, realizing the general air of desperation and panic that pervades the Bunker. While the testing *must* be done, and reports *must* be submitted, he doesn’t look too closely into how the process takes place. On the other hand, anybody caught falsifying reports (which would endanger *him*) or damaging his beloved records will be court-martialed, and shot. He’s quite merciful, really.

CHTHONIC CHOROGRAPHY

*The Shedite rubbed a few tentacles together. "Well now, if it's the area around Baron Serivan's estate you're looking for, I think that I **do** have a map of that . . . assuming that you can afford it."*

In a corner of Stygia, in the shadow of the Palazzo Furto, is a small shop. Its tiny window is criss-crossed with heavy iron bars, and its door is thick steel, multiply locked and bolted on the inside. There is no back exit, and the owner – a Shedite of Theft named Noisatu – never leaves the premises. One might almost think that it was afraid of thieves.

In a Principality of Hell that is all twisted warrens and tangled corridors, Noisatu sells a vital commodity – maps. It is true that places in Hell shift in relation to each other, and that pathways are often uncertain, but even so, a map offers some small hope. With the *right* map, a demon might be able to find his way to that vital target.

To enter the shop, a demon must present himself at the window. Noisatu will then open the door, assuming the demon doesn't look like an active threat. (Damned souls are only allowed in if they can present a token showing that they're working for a demonic master.) Once inside, the demon can inspect the maps, which are all locked inside metal-and-glass cases that are chained to the bookshelves. Caesarea, a Djinn of Theft, lies next to the door

The Impudite glanced from side to side as he listened to Ximenes talking with the Shedite proprietor of the shop, watching for threats.

"Broceliande," the Habbalite repeated impatiently. "It's one of the fae Domains in the Marches. They said you might have a map."

Noisatu rubbed its tentacles together. "Oh, my dear sir," it murmured greasily. "For *you*, I think I have something. Very rare, very rare indeed, you wouldn't find this one even in Yves' Library . . ."

With a snarl, Ximenes leaned forward and grabbed a handful of Shedite organs. "Listen to me, you pitiful scum. I. Want . . ."

The Djinn by the door rose to a half-crouched position, and growled, the hair going up along her back.

"A. Map." Ximenes released Noisatu, and made a careful show of wiping his hand. "Of Broceliande. Right?"

"Right," the Shedite agreed.

and watches the customers. Should the demon find a map that he wants, Noisatu will bargain over the price. This ranges from a few points of Essence for a map of nearby streets, to valuable Relics for maps of the Palazzo Furto itself. Noisatu also sells maps of areas in other Principalities, and even on Earth – naturally, it charges a higher price for those. It has a good reputation, and once or twice in areas where its maps were proven wrong, it has actually *refunded the payment*. This action, nearly unheard of in Stygia, has caused people to speculate wildly – and to come to its shop more often.



The lockpick shop across the street was recently taken over by a new owner. This Balseraph claims to be Anna, just another Servitor of Theft, with a large Calabite staff to discourage "borrowing." She is actually Alicia, a Knight of Theft, but is leaving "clues" strewn around to suggest that she belongs to the Game. Her Calabim are taking it in turns to tunnel under the street to beneath Noisatu's shop.

Valefor has found that Noisatu has a map of the Palazzo Furto that includes certain secret entrances to other Principalities. He wants it retrieved without signaling its importance, so he has ordered Alicia to stage a major theft, with a lot of property destruction, but to leave Noisatu alive and cast blame on the Game. So far, everything is going as Alicia has planned. She's cool-headed and intelligent; if she's suspected as being from the Game, she'll work to confirm those suspicions. If she has to flee, she'll ascend to Earth, then return to her Heart, thus breaking her trail.

Noisatu, Shedite of Theft, Shopkeeper

Noisatu is avaricious, pragmatic, and cowardly. It's simple fear that makes it return money when its maps are proven clearly wrong, and that stops it from selling incorrect maps. Noisatu has a vivid imagination, and suffers from nightmares of being ripped shred from shred by angry Calabim. This accounts for its polite manner, but leads everyone in the area to believe that it must be more powerful and devious than they suspect. However, it *does* have a talent for bargaining and for running the shop, which keeps it modestly well off. The Djinn guard, Caesarea, considers Noisatu better than most Shedim, as its cowardice has kept it from abusing her.



THE FAIR CHANCE

There was a hush as the Impudite called, "Rien ne va plus!" and spun the roulette wheel. The ball bounced off the sides, bounding and rebounding until it finally dropped into a slot. Green, zero.

There was an intake of breath from the powerful demons gathered around the table, then a collective shrug as though to make light of their loss. The Impudite kept his eyes lowered as he raked in their stakes, not daring to meet their eyes.

Nobody is quite certain when this casino opened its doors in Hades. It has always served the better-off and the more powerful demons. For a demon to be seen there means that the demon has *status* – even if they lose at the gambling. Even Asmodeus is believed to pass through from time to time, though nobody can personally say they have seen him bet – or win, or lose.

The casino itself is set off one of Hades' less crowded highways, where the usual smog and din are reduced to mere fog and wandering gangs. Visitors can afford bodyguards, or are of enough power to make bodyguards unnecessary. A chained group of souls constantly scrub the pavement in front of the golden door, removing garbage and mopping away fresh blood and grease. They all have their tongues removed – so as not to be able to gossip about visitors – but are treated well

enough, compared to many souls in Hades. They're even given the Casino's uniform to wear, though they are punished if they get it dirty.

The golden door in the featureless brick wall gives onto a foyer that is a direct contrast to the street outside. Built from black marble in the height of good taste, it is thick-walled enough that the sound of Hades beyond is nearly blocked out. Two well-groomed Djinn security guards wait by the door; an Impudite receptionist greets the guests and shows them in. (Guests who are clearly lower-class or of low power are refused entry at this point. Bribes *may* work, if the guest can be very convincing. The entry guards will have to admit to letting him in if questioned, however, so are careful what they take, for fear of being punished later.)

The receptionist guides guests up a wide flight of stairs into a large casino hall, full of card tables, roulette wheels, and any device that one could ask for to gamble with. The hall is *always* full of guests, as the casino never closes, just as Hades never sleeps. A string quartet of damned souls noted for their musical skills plays in a recessed nook in the wall, so that there is a constant background of music. To one side of the stairwell is a counter where guests can exchange Essence for tokens that can be gambled with, and leave their coats. (Of course, Essence is a very *small* stake in these surroundings.) A bar on the other side of the stairwell provides drinks to all guests, at no charge. It is assumed that guests are going to be gambling, and gambling heavily – else why would they be here? Cheapskates who try to leave without gambling, after enjoying the hospitality of the Fair Chance, will be refused entry again, and may well be thrown out into the street.

The main hall is floored with black marble and walled with dark mirrors. Onyx chandeliers hang from the ceiling above, making it a place of coolly shifting lights. The guests – all high-ranking demons – move around the floor and patronize the tables, placing bets or dealing with personal business. Naturally, the Fair Chance is a perfect place to exercise private blackmail, pressuring, and trading of information or passing orders. *Everybody* is aware that this takes place, and every demon listens to the conversations going on around him and watches the interactions of other notables.

In the main hall, general gambling games take place – roulette, cards, *chemin-de-fer*, billiards, and so on. There are numerous private and semi-private rooms. These are used for dalliances and private meetings, or for more exotic forms of gambling. Demons will bet on all sorts of interesting things . . . such as the time it will take for a lizard to dig itself out of a chained soul's belly; or the pitches of the screams produced by two identical twins; or 1,000 tosses of two dice; or whether a soul or low-

ranking demon can complete an “obstacle course” which the casino provides. Old, powerful demons are jaded and bored; something *exciting* in the way of gambling provides a little spark of interest. All sorts of things are wagered – Essence, souls, property, services, relics and reliquaries. It is even said that once a Word was wagered here, and that Lucifer himself held the stakes . . . though nobody knows what Word it was, even if the story is true.

The demons who work at the casino tables are all chained to their station by one ankle – though with a very elegant chain. It is considered somewhat vulgar for a guest to tear apart a dealer to relieve his feelings if he has just lost, although it has been known to happen. Generally, a dealer is trained to one particular post, and can then look forward to spending the rest of eternity in that job. His only hope of escape is if he manages to interest a guest (though *not* by helping him cheat) enough for the guest to request that he be assigned to his service.

Security guards move discreetly through the casino, checking side corridors and back entrances. Waiters move through the crowd every now and again, with drinks and daintily cut foods brought across from Haagenti’s restaurants in Shal-Mari. Everything is arranged for the luxury of the guests, so that they can indulge recklessly in comfort.

The owner of the casino is Ambsace, an Impudite who is always conscious of the need to keep her guests happy. She moves through the casino, greeting visitors and exchanging a few words here and there. To have Ambsace speak to you is a sign that a demon has fully *arrived* in the high society of Hades. Occasionally she even holds the stakes for a very high-level game, or acts as dealer. In case of argument, her decision is final.

Ampsace, Impudite of the Game, Manager of the Fair Chance

Ampsace is cunning, charming, and cold-blooded, seeing her masterwork – the Fair Chance – as a reflection of herself. She spent her early years on earth as the mistress of a casino owner, then eventually as a casino owner herself. She decided that her Prince’s Word covered all forms of gambling – as a Game – and saw profit in pushing this point of view in Hell. The Fair Chance was a small casino when it first opened in Hades, but grew rapidly. Ampsace guards its reputation jealously, and does her best to distinguish it from “those trashy affairs in Shal-Mari.” She takes the occasional day off from her work to visit important Earth casinos, and to inspect the latest development and games. She does, after all, want to be fashionable.

THE GREAT CLOCK

“But it was different here yesterday!” the Lilim whimpered, eyes wide with horror as she looked around the rune-engraved plaques of ivory that filled the room. “I know it was!”

It is generally known that the corridors of Kronos’ Archive in Hell shift according to Kronos’ will, and that rooms change from day to day. A widely held belief is that certain inner parts of the Archive shift to form the interior of an immense clock. Long corridors correspond to the position of levers, stairs correspond to gears, rooms move around each other like cogwheels.

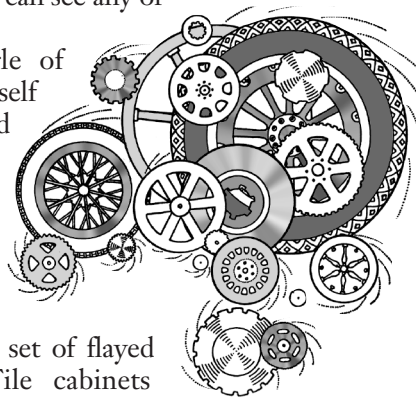
Nobody *inside* the rooms can see any of this, of course . . .

The Escherlike tangle of passages turns around itself imperceptibly slowly, and sections claimed by particular demons remain in one piece. However, they shift slowly away from each other. A room of antique books may swap places with a set of flayed and tattooed skins. File cabinets stuffed with files of vital information may be exchanged for tapes of children’s stories – in the Demonic tongue. Obsessed Servitors of Fate assigned to particular areas of the Archives will claim that their sections have *always* been where they currently are, and refuse to listen to those who claim otherwise.

There is a general belief that the clock “strikes” regularly, once in every year that passes in the corporeal world. At that time, if a demon is in the *center* of its configuration, it is said that a window of possibility opens in front of him, and he will see the moment of his death. Some might think that demons would wish to *avoid* such a thing, but then again, many believe that they can change their fate once they have seen it. (Even Servitors of Fate . . .)

As the moment of the “striking” grows closer, the Archives shift more regularly. Corridors lead in only one direction whichever way one walks down them, stairs slowly sink into the ground, rooms invert, books swarm and fly through the halls like bees. Many inhabitants pass this off as merely normal. Others try to find some sort of *pattern* to the warpings around them, so that they can be at its center.

Kronos himself makes no comment on these beliefs, or on any of the occurrences. He is where he needs to be, and if anybody fails to meet him there, so much the worse for them. Senior Servitors take their cue from him, and disregard the stories.



However, there are always enough junior demons of Fate sufficiently motivated to try and research it all. Some of them find that the in-depth study of the Archives actually helps them rise in the ranks of Fate. If they are given their own section to look after, they tend to lose interest in wild chases . . . Others continue to try to find the center of this great clock, becoming as obsessive in their pursuit as any of the demons attached to sections. The currently best-known seeker is Bashan, an Impudite of Fate.

One result of all this searching is that the demons involved usually have *excellent* maps of the Archives – at least until it changes again. They can also, though less often, make reasonable predictions of where a particular room might currently be. This provides at least some reward for their labors.

Bashan, Impudite of Fate, Seeker

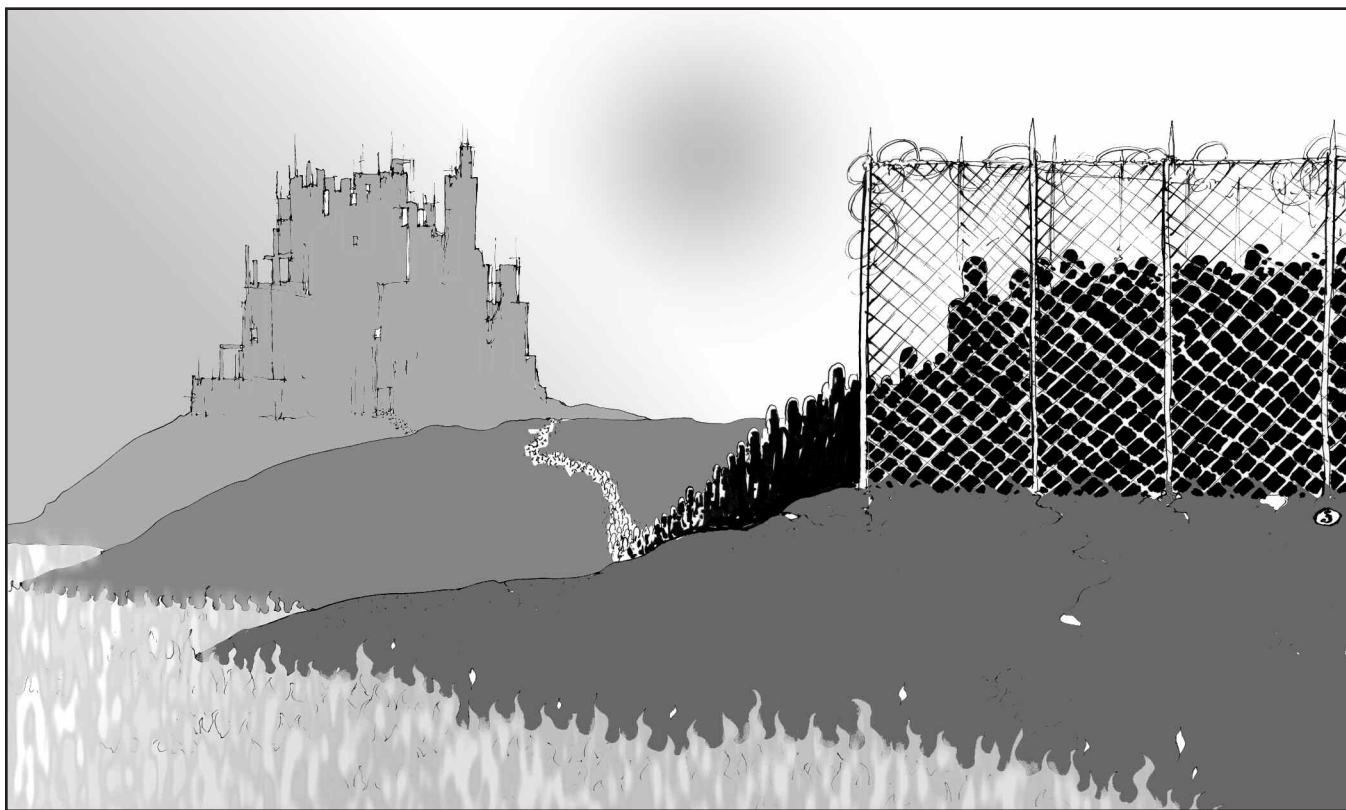
Bashan is obsessed by the fear of losing his looks and becoming ugly. He always wears white cotton gloves to protect his hands, and often a surgical mask to protect his face. He is prepared to give maps or directions to other demons, but usually asks for information in return – often that they check out some location while in the neighborhood, then report its current nature and status to him. He is not often double-crossed, as most people want to be able to use his services again.

LABOR GROUNDS

The hauling chant rang across the lake of fire, and the demons swimming there watched the damned souls begin to drag timbers into position. “Gotta love it,” murmured a Shedite. “Wonder how long till we can burn it down?”

Throughout Sheol, there are many buildings – palaces, houses, monuments, castles, tenements – and they all burn. The whole purpose of their existence is to be set aflame for the amusement of Belial and his Servitors. However, someone has to build them, and *that* certainly isn't a job for demons . . .

Close to one of the borders to Hades, there is a large site which serves as a labor pool and central administration point for the erection of buildings. While many of Belial's more powerful Servitors – Dukes and the like – supervise their own building projects, they can requisition laborers and supplies from here. A building gets produced faster if you have trained workers on the job, after all, and Belial's Servitors tend to be impatient. The Labor Grounds get a share of the souls that come to Sheol from the Soul Yards in Hades, and have developed (over the centuries) a reliable set of laborers. Egyptians who raised stones for the Pyramids rub shoulders with 20th-century steelworkers, and medieval woodcutters work beside Renaissance masons.



Of course, it's no better than any other task in Sheol. Even if a skilled and efficient laborer *can* achieve some tiny measure of notice from the demons for his work, it won't win him any favors. He's still just as likely as anyone else to be thrown into a river of fire, grilled, or otherwise tortured. What's more, the laborers have a *true* understanding of the nature of utter pointlessness and hopelessness, as, time and time again, they see all their work reduced to ashes. It's soul-destroying in a way that goes deeper than the simple pains of fire. Those laborers who manage to survive through centuries of this are numbed to it, simply constructing each new project without thinking about its inevitable destruction.

The Labor Grounds are on the bank of one of the largest lakes of fire in Sheol. This positioning is a motivational tactic by Zurath, the Calabite Supervisor of the Grounds. Workers realize quite fast that application to their jobs may – possibly – save them an eternity of pain. (It won't.) Souls selected as laborers are either reasonably high in Will (which can result in children or old women working alongside muscled men) or have some applicable skill, or both. There's even a place for expert woodcarvers and decorators – after all, it's so much more *fun* for the demons to torch a house if a great deal of effort went into beautifying it.

Demons corral groups of damned souls into labor gangs, marshalling them to march elsewhere in Sheol to work on projects there. Experienced souls pass on what building skills they have, in spare moments when there is no demon giving direct orders. Groups of souls haul timber, rock, and other building materials, as directed by their demonic masters. The whole scene is a hive of activity. There are no walls, save those they themselves build.

Zurath, Calabite of Fire, Supervisor of the Grounds

Zurath is a Calabite who resembles a volcano – apparently patient, but from time to time bursting out in a wild orgy of destruction. Experienced demonic underlings and souls know enough to get out of the way on those occasions. Damned souls are even prepared to jump into the lake of fire to avoid him. He's expected to provide labor and materials to any Word-bound or territory-owning Servitor of Belial, at short notice, whenever they want it. Naturally, he takes bribes. His Djinn secretaries keep a full record of sums received and laborers sent out. (This isn't a treasonous offense – taking bribes is perfectly *normal* in his position.)

THE MUSEUM OF THE DREAMS OF MURDERERS

The Djinn pointed at the tiny childlike hand that crawled around in the cage, mouths opening and closing in its fingers. "Now, this is an excellent example of pedophobia . . ."

Even Beleth has an appreciation of art – or rather, what she regards as art. In her Tower she collects fragments of nightmares, and permits her Servitors to add to that collection if they find a particularly noteworthy specimen. One of the best known of her selections is the Museum of the Dreams of Murderers.

These corridors, all black marble and jet, are filled with cages in which fragmentary Ethereals repeat their mindless cycles. They are born from the dreams of murderers, and lack *true* self-awareness or identity, merely repeating the same patterns time and time again like a cracked record. A half-eviscerated woman's body folds back its skin with an inviting smile. A knife whispers a constant litany of affection. A child's face screams until it shatters like china. A looming, giant-like figure bleeds from the eyes and mouth, and its cage fills with blood. Flies swarm and buzz, concealing the figure at the center and letting only its wedding ring be seen. Constant blank-faced men in business suits march by like Magritte paintings, turning to show empty suits of clothing and marionette strings.

Damned souls are chained by the neck to some cages, and crouch there, terrified, watching the Ethereals helplessly. These are the pride of Beleth's collection – the souls of the murderers, reunited with their nightmares for eternity. Once a day, they can spend their point of Essence for a single minute of blindness. A minute, no more, no less. The pain of feeling the precious seconds of blindness tick away is even worse than the pain of watching their nightmares throughout eternity.

Beleth will go to some lengths to collect the souls of those murderers whose nightmares she already has. If the owner of the nightmare can be identified and located in another Principality, a squad of demons is sent to fetch it. These demons are aware that the job is easier if the soul comes willingly, and can easily lure a soul with promises of better treatment. Once in Beleth's Tower, of course, the soul is dragged to his nightmare and chained there for the rest of eternity.

Junior demons wander the Museum to inspect what humans can achieve when suitably motivated, and to get ideas for their own work. To actually have an Ethereal fragment accepted for the Museum is a mark of honor, and a sign that Beleth has noticed the work of the demon in question. Of course, this may be a dangerous thing . . .

Some Servitors of Nightmares have started actively looking for those murderers still alive who have nightmares in the Museum. These Servitors believe that if they can kill the humans, and then track their souls to Hell and retrieve them, they will certainly get Beleth's attention. However, not all those who have had nightmares about killing are necessarily hellbound – even a Soldier of God could have a nightmare in the Museum. Now, collecting *his* soul would be a real challenge.

Haradah, Shedite of Nightmares, Curator of the Museum

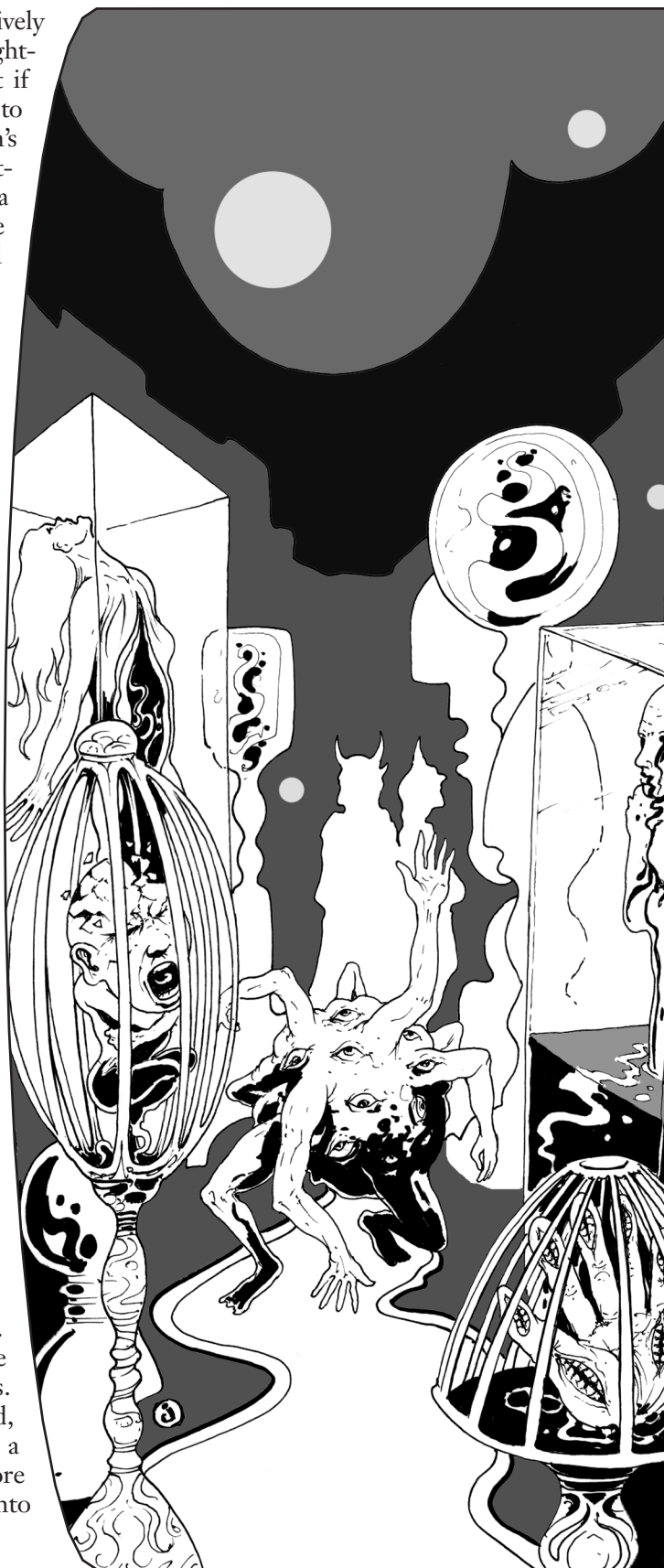
Haradah is an old and bitter Shedite who isn't ashamed to admit that occasionally humanity can outdo demons in creating nightmares. It points out the displays in the Museum as demonstration of this, and is always pleased when his Princess permits a new Ethereal to be caged there. Of course, it also *detests* human souls for daring to surpass demons, and smugly gloats over the murderers chained in the Museum. Haradah is always glad to sponsor a mission to go and capture a soul for the collection, and will give any information it has regarding the murderer in question. It has several Djinn underlings who assist it in keeping the Museum in order.

THE PITS

*The crowd's yelling for blood was shaking the cavern. Inside his study, the Balseraph stared at his subordinates. "Well, my dear boys, it's really quite simple. You didn't get me a demon of the War for the next combat. This means one of **you** is going to have to go out there. I'll give you 45 seconds to decide which . . ."*

The caverns and tunnels of Stygia are endless. If they were laid in a straight line, it is said that they would stretch into infinity. Some demons and damned souls wander lost in the darkness forever, and never manage to find their way out. At times, far in the distance, they hear the sound of cheering and cries for blood, the stamping of feet and the surging of a mob. They hear the noise coming from the Pits.

The Pits host Hell's gladiatorial games. Combatants come – or are dragged – from all the Principalities, both demons and damned souls. Occasionally there is even an angel involved, although this is extremely hazardous, and only for a private audience. (Most Princes can think of far more useful things to do with angels than throw them into the games.)



The Pits have been open since before Valefor's enthronement, since the very beginning of Stygia under Malphas' rule. It has been said that the first five demons of Malphas met there; two to fight, two to cheer them on, and the fifth to hold the stakes. More accurate opinion says that the place was created in imitation of the gladiatorial games during the decadence of the Roman Empire on Earth above. In any case, almost all demons of Factions know how to find their way there, and most demons of Valefor can locate it too. But weaker demons are careful about venturing nearby – it's a predatory environment. They go in groups, and of course, when one group meets another group, things can turn ugly.

The actual spectator area is comparatively small, only able to seat a few hundred, or more if they are packed together. (Important demons sitting at the front will not wish to be packed together.) This lends an air of desperation to the struggles for tickets. Spectators standing near the doors can call out descriptions of the action to the unfortunate demons left outside, and keep the gamblers aware of the state of play.

Naturally, there is keen betting on the outcome of matches. Much to the disgust of gamblers, the actual *combatants* are only announced on the day itself – after all, the organizers can't always be sure of having the victim they want on hand. Kidnappings have been known to fail, and the crowd takes badly to last-minute substitutions . . .

The center of the Pits is the main arena, a natural smooth-walled pit. Metal facings have been attached to the walls, and can be turned so as to cover the walls with spikes, or to force them inward on the combatants. Several tunnels extend from the main pit: all barred by heavy gates during combat. The tunnels lead to the cells where combatants are held prior to the fights, and past several guardrooms, and ultimately to the administration offices. There are also several storerooms with varying kinds of melee weapons. Combatants are not allowed missile weapons (for obvious reasons) but are at times given swords, spears, daggers, and similar gear.

The cells are dank, stinking, small, and very well locked. The administrators have an extremely limited number of Will Shackles (*Liber Reliquarum*, pp. 81-82) which are used strictly to stop captives escaping by ascending to any vessel they may have. (Or, if they're an angel, to stop them ascending to Heaven.) The Will Shackles have been acquired by the administration over the centuries, from various sources, and represent a large amount of the place's resources. However, they earn their worth every time they restrain an interesting victim for a truly spectacular match. Captives are ordered *not* to attempt to invoke their Superior, and not to attempt to ascend. They are otherwise left free to fight as best they can – it wouldn't be a proper fight otherwise.

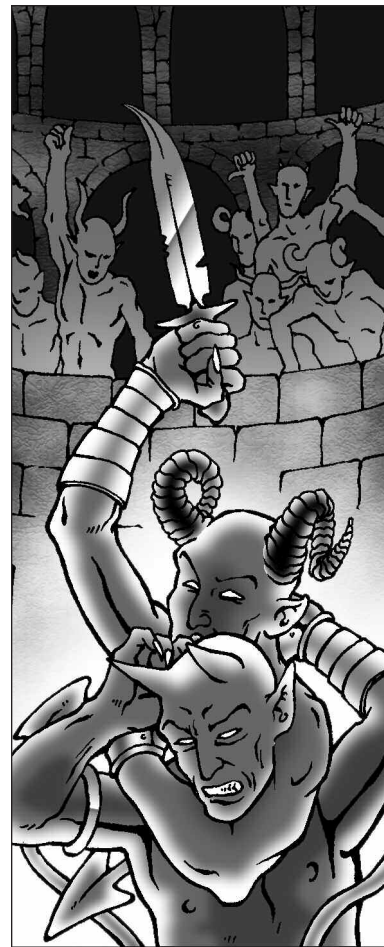
Information about forthcoming matches is posted on large notices to either side of the tunnel mouth leading to the Pits, and rapidly spreads from there throughout Stygia. Higher-ranking demons come elaborately masked, so as not to be recognized. Lower-ranking demons jostle in mobs, trying to get through the barriers and into the seating area. Payment is in Essence, which is given to the guards that man the ticket barriers, and then transferred into a central reservoir. If – after the seating is full – more higher-ranking demons arrive, lower-ranking demons are naturally thrown out to make room for them, even if they have already paid. Demons from other Principalities can attend, but are vastly outnumbered and very definitely the smallest faction present.

There have been cases of such visitors being thrown into the arena by proactive audiences.

The administration is done by the Committee, which consists of three Balseraphs and three Impudites. None of them trusts the others, so they are all permanently in residence at the Pits, unless personally summoned by Malphas to his palace. Each is responsible for at least one combat per week, and collects the takings from that combat. This results in competition to collect the best fighters.

While at least two-thirds of the combatants are volunteers attempting to get experience and to be noticed, the remaining combatants are kidnapped and forced into the arena. Kidnap squads are ordered either to fetch a particular person (in which case they are given a dossier on that person) or just a generic type (such as "a demon of Fire.") They are expendable, and will be disavowed if caught.

Credulous victims are told that they will be released if they put on a good show and survive. Cynical victims are told that fighting will at least keep them alive a little longer.



While other Princes are aware of the existence of this place, there is no actual *proof* of its activities outside Stygia, and any attempt to acquire such would be taken as a personal challenge by Malphas. From time to time, celestials will attempt to rescue friends from the Pits. Even if they did succeed, though, the administration would never admit to it . . .

Feythi, Balseraph of Factions, Administration

Feythi is one of the six demons who make up the Committee. Paranoid and ingenious, he's desperate for someone to love him for himself alone. He's been part of the Committee since the Pits were created, and doesn't *want* Redemption, or Heaven, or any other life – he just wants to be appreciated. In the meantime, he'll settle for the adoration of those who he has resonated, or just those wanting favors from him. His briefings to kidnap squads are reliable and accurate, as he wants them to bring the potential combatants back alive. While he suspects the rest of the Committee out of principle, the centuries have convinced him that they form a reasonably stable team.

Lucille, Lilim of Factions, Kidnapper

Lucille is a sultry young Lilim, who bound herself to Malphas under the belief that he was grooming her for the fast track and power. She soon realized that *everybody* working for him believed that. In an attempt to discreetly get Geases on important demons of Factions, she's hooked up with the Pits and is working in one of the kidnap squads. Her role is to distract the target, then attract everyone else's attention while the others get him away. She realizes that this gets more dangerous every time she tries it outside Stygia, as the chance of her being recognized rises, but so far the price has been worth it.

PRINCIPALITY PAPERS

"We're here to see the editor." The three demons of Baal were in full uniform – which meant sidearms, rifles, and in one case a rocket launcher.

The secretary gave her most practiced smile. "I'm sure he'll be with you in a moment, sir. But right now he's in a meeting with some of the top people in Perdition . . ."

The Calabite at the front of the group leant forward, thrusting his face into hers. "I don't think you understand.

We read that article he ran on our legion. We're here so he can give us some good reasons not to hang his hide on the wall."

There was a click as another of the Servitors of War flipped the catch on his rifle, then a boom. The monitor camera on the wall exploded.

Now I know what happened to the last person who had this job, the secretary thought . . .

Principality Papers is a news agency of Perdition, with the duty of discovering and reporting news throughout Hell – and making it, if there isn't any to be discovered. So far, this agency has been noted for its award-winning filming of Prince Haagenti pronouncing sentence on Renegades. (The award was for Best Filming of Foodstuffs Under Hazardous Conditions – Perdition has more film awards than can be imagined.)

Unfortunately for Principality Papers, their reputation is not particularly high. They cover the Perdition equivalent of wedding photos and funerals. However, with true enthusiasm they rise to this challenge, and are willing to put *any* desired slant on the material. A simple photo opportunity at the appointment of a new Baron of Fire became a dramatic expose of the kidnap and smuggling of demons of Lust into Sheol. (Nobody has yet discovered how the chained Servitor of Andrealphus turned up in the podium.)



To be entirely frank about it, Principality Papers is a band of incompetents led by a Balseraph desperate for an easy life. Half of them are reporter-wannabes hoping for the big break, and the other half are time-servers trying to avoid being assigned to an even *worse* duty. There is *one* decent reporter on the staff – an old Impudite, Shodski, who's seen the worst and interviewed it. He's responsible for the number of occasions that the reporters manage to turn up at the right place and at the right time, but unfortunately he can't stop them messing things up once they're there. The editor of the paper, Zamvei, is a Balseraph who managed to talk his way into the post because he hoped it would keep him away from the front lines. He recruits eager young reporters to fill the frequent "staff vacancies" that seem to keep on occurring.

The offices of Principality Papers are in Perdition – though if they're investigating something in another Principality, the reporters on the case will find somewhere in that Principality to base themselves. They are located a little lower down than the skyscrapers, and a little further up than the muckrakers at street level. Most of the space is taken up by the printing presses and the files. The files are kept by Cassis, a Djinn who is devoted to his job, and who mangled the last junior reporter to try and walk out with loose photographs. New reporters are warned (occasionally) by their seniors about this hazard. The building has more floors than it *should* have, and for some reason the printing presses are on the top levels, making the entire building shudder and shake when they're working – which is almost always.

As visitors enter, they are greeted by a secretary, who is chosen for good looks and smile rather than intelligence. A monitor camera whirrs in the corner of the room, always on the watch for heavy weaponry and Game insignia on the part of visitors. (This triggers an instant exit of reporters from the building through attics, cellars, and back doors.) The secretary will pleasantly greet visitors, and inform them that the editor is in a top-level meeting, but will see them as soon as possible. Principality Papers is happy to employ damned souls as secretaries, and many an ex-starlet has found a comfortable niche with them – until the next group of callers came to complain about a news article.

The reporters often have communal offices, and are crammed into literally hellish conditions, forced to struggle for a desk, chair, computer, and coffee machine. The only reporter to have his own office *reliably* is Shodski. The walls are covered from floor to ceiling with photographs of him in famous locations and with famous personalities. (His own favorite is the one of him interviewing Nybbas, just before the latter became a

Prince. He treasures it, and would move heaven and earth to get it back if it were stolen.) His cupboards are packed with files of his own past articles, and the ceiling is inlaid with mirror-tiles so that he can admire himself better while leaning back in his chair.

When a story is assigned – normally by Shodski, though the order may ultimately come from Zamvei – the junior reporters are thrown into urgent competition. Firstly, to find out if it is *worth* getting, and secondly, to get it if it is worth getting. The currently most energetic reporter is Rififi, a young Habbalite, who has decided that his ultimate duty is to expose evil and scourge it. While he has the makings of an excellent reporter, he keeps on finding his trenchant articles being rejected by the editor. (Zamvei has enough good sense to be careful about *whom* he runs dramatic scoops on.) The Habbalite, however, is certain that his dedication will be rewarded – some day.

“ . . . And no, I don't care whether you were *ordered* to interview it or not. It moves, you interview it. It doesn't move, you run a feature on it. Simple enough for you? Lucifer give me strength, what happened to the *good* reporters? What happened to the demons with a genuine nose for news? Let me make this absolutely, totally, perfectly clear. Next time you hear someone – anyone – using the words Marches, fae, Broceliande, and Magog in the same sentence (may the Lightbringer give you keener ears) . . . You *grab* them and you *interview* them. You do *not* come back here and put it in a memo!”

Any investigative report must be accompanied by photographs. Nobody disagrees that the main cameraman for Principality Papers is extremely good at his job – he's a Shedite, Perditor by name, with enough tentacles to handle the most complicated machinery. The only problem is that he has Vapulan friends, who supply him with the latest in camera technology. The Shedite wants to *use* this, and is always suggesting investigative reports in the middle of Sheol lava vents, or Gehennan wars. This does not endear him to the reporters, but unfortunately he's too *good* at his job to be disposed of.

The rest of the staff fluctuates regularly, as people leave for a better job or die in the line of duty. However, a lot of junior demons and the damned see Principality Papers as a possible route to a brilliant future. They're certainly busy enough . . .



Zamvei, Editor

Zamvei's main interests are not offending anybody too high in authority, expanding the paper's influence, and employing voluptuous secretaries. He knows that Shodski *is* good at his job, and lets him handle the assignment of investigations. His role in the process is to go to important meetings, and censor any articles which might offend Princes. Anybody wanting to complain about the paper will have to go through several layers of secretaries and staff to reach him. By that point he will probably have some blackmail material on them – enough to make them go away.

Shodski, Experienced Reporter

Shodski came up through the ranks the hard way, starting off as an investigator in Hades, and joining the Media when Nybbas came to power. He's the archetype of the hard-bitten, hard-drinking, hard-writing reporter. He sees some of the junior reporters as younger versions of himself – unfortunately, he's too selfish to actually bother to *help* them. He knows that Principality Papers is never going to achieve *real* influence, but he works hard to keep it going. One thing that he does value is the respect of other reporters, and he's willing to go some way to try to get it.

RED SILKS

The Captain of Dark Humor smirked, his gaze sweeping along the various posing demons in the red-curtained room. One little Balseraph blinked three pairs of eyes at him in a ripple, then swooned artistically. He grinned widely. "I'll take that one."

In Shal-Mari, there are many brothels. Red Silks is one, and despite the best efforts of its Impudite manager, Madam Alush, it doesn't rise further than "Classy." Still, it caters to the vacationing demons who visit the Principality. It's recognizable from the red silk flags above its doors.

The theme for Red Silks is, unimaginatively, endless variations on the color of red. Every shade of red imaginable is used, on leather, satin, suede or silk – *lots* of silk – with accents of copper, gold, silver, and black. For all the overdose of color, however, the bordello is not shoddy. The leathers are supple, the carpets plush enough to wade through, and the exotic equipment is well-made. Unlike the lower-class establishments, the velvet wallpaper is not tatty or faded, and the pornographic pictures and murals are dusted regularly.

The large, multi-story building is built in an empty square, with a small, surprisingly elegant garden in the center, open to what passes for the sky. Balconies stud the inner walls, curtained with translucent rose fabric. Unobtrusive and decorative Calabite and Djinn guards perch on the roof to ensure the privacy of the customers.

There are two major kinds of rooms at Red Silks: single rooms, ranging from mere bedrooms to those with decor like a movie set, and suites (which have a sitting room, a fully equipped bedroom, and a bathroom with a sunken Jacuzzi tub connected to the other two rooms). The various suites range from small and plainly furnished, to large and extravagant with a balcony overlooking the garden. The smaller suites have numbers, while the better ones are referred to by the common distinctions – the best available to customers is the Ducal Suite. Naturally, microphones are included in every suite to collect useful information. As in every brothel run by Lust, there is a perfectly-kept Princely Suite, using up most of the highest story of the building, should the Beautiful Prince wish to drop in.

Other areas include the office of Madam Alush, off-duty rooms for the guards and servants, the large "greeting room" where clients choose companions, and a pair of smaller greeting rooms for discreet customers – accessible via side-doors.

Between the rooms and public corridors are the servants' halls, honeycombing the brothel. There are hidden doors into every suite, with peepholes. Niches in

the ceilings and walls house proto-Djinn imps, who are supposed to give the alarm if they spot an intruder. There is also a back door into the building, opening into an alley from the servants' passages.

The "performers" at Red Silks are exclusively celestial; all are actual fledged demons. Few of them have ever been to Earth; they have spent their entire lives within the neon-hazed darkness of Shal-Mari, indulging themselves and their clients. Each is served by several well-trained damned souls, who have learned that by enslaving themselves, they gain a measure of protection. (It's hard to train them to perfection, so they're just valuable enough not to waste casually.) The higher-ranking the demon, the more human servants it commands. The demons have their own three-room suites, which they have some freedom to decorate and furnish to suit their own tastes. They entertain clients either there, or in one of the customer suites.

The fact that Red Silks is neither particularly major nor uselessly minor has brought it to the attention of the Game. The Servitors of Asmodeus are always on the lookout for listening-posts in other Principalities, and would like to gain a controlling interest in somewhere like Red Silks. They could use it as a base to hide agents, and to gather information – all they need is an opening, and some Servitors of Lust who would cooperate. The principle of exactly who was dominant could be negotiated later. After all, once the Servitors of Lust had agreed to help, they would be vulnerable to having the whole matter revealed to Andrealphus, and to suitable punishment . . .

Madam Alush, Impudite of Lust, Proprietor

Willowy and elegant, draped in sheer red silks, and with rubies gracing her fingers and wing-leather, Madam Alush is a 9-Force Impudite who has never been to Earth, and has no interest in going. She's carved out her little niche in Shal-Mari, and she's quite happy with it – there are demons she can boss around, adoring souls to drain of Essence, and she's not involved in politics enough to be bossed around by bigger demons. She's comfortable where she is, as intent on her own comfort and tastes as her Prince is on his Word. Unfortunately for her, she has no idea of the machinations of the Game, or of Adna the Balseraph, or even of Ysari. What she *does* have is a Hell-honed vicious survival instinct, which has kept her in control of Red Silks so far.

Adna, Balseraph of Lust, Employee

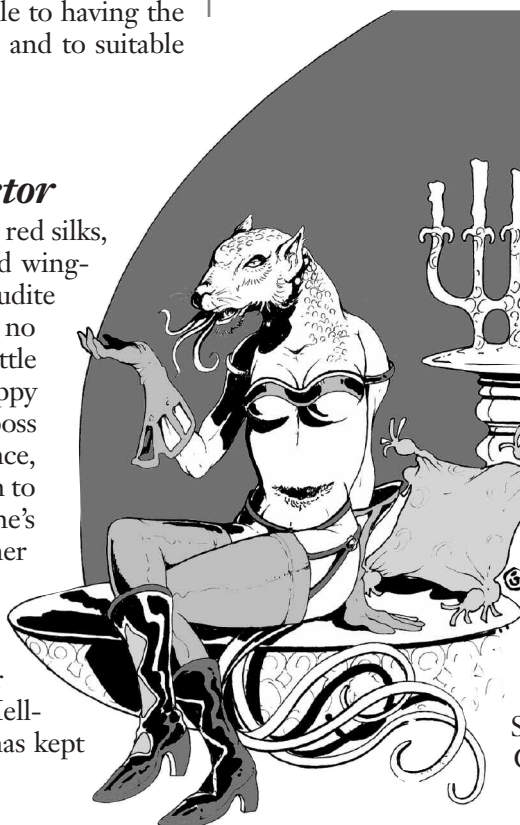
Adna is a garnet-colored Balseraph of the traditional breed, using his attunement upon others to cause them pleasure upon the rack and beneath the lash. He has ambitions, naturally, and has decided to take control of Red Silks.

His previous plot was to recruit several disreputable sorts to cause long-term disturbance at the brothel until it became apparent that Madam Alush was unable to keep control. Adna could then have stepped in and heroically saved the day, and gained control. So far this is not working, and the Balseraph is considering taking it a step further, by persuading agents of the Game to help him destabilize the brothel, in return for unstated future favors. He has begun having discussions with Molimen, a Habbalite of the Game and a frequent visitor to Red Silks. Adna is out of his depth here, and fails to understand the strength of the forces that he is dealing with.

Ysari, Djinn of Lust, Secret Agent

Ysari is the newest of the stars, a Djinn who looks like a three-tailed, three-tongued scaly cougar with a marsupial pouch. Ysari – of the neat, meticulous breed – is actually one of Lust's security experts, spying on the clients,

but gives them no reason to complain for their money. It also gets a lot of custom from Molimen, the Habbalite Gamester on the beat, who enjoys playing "Does it know I know?" games with its counterpart. (Ysari is *mostly* sure that the Gamester knows Ysari is a Lust-spy. Mostly.) Madam Alush doesn't know Ysari's secret, but she is less than pleased by the Game's patronage of her establishment, both because the Habbalite is undoubtedly spying on her customers, and because he doesn't *pay*. Ysari hasn't as yet realized the links between Adna and Molimen, but would bring in help if necessary to stop Red Silks becoming an outpost for the Game.



THE SHAL-MARI METRO

The Impudite struggled to extract her wing from between two damned souls. "Let go of me! One wrong move and I'll have you whipped! And don't think I can't do it!"

From the edge of the platform, the Calabite waved at her. "Over here! If we get this one, then change at Naraka Central, we can be at the appointment in time."

Above, a voice creaked out over the loudspeaker, "The train now at platform 153 will terminate at this station. Please clear the area in an orderly manner..."

Somewhere, below Shal-Mari, there runs a subway. After all, demons and the damned don't always want to walk the dangerous streets to get somewhere. They might want to journey more safely, more rapidly...

It's always hot. The air conditioning has yet to work, despite the daily promises by Vapulan engineers. Only

the most pitiful consider the snack machines. While nobody has yet *proven* that the food is waste-product from Tartarus, it definitely isn't supplied by any halfway-palatable establishment of Haagenti. It just sits there and moulders, drying out a little more with every passing minute.

On board the trains, the carriages shriek and shudder as they go (far too fast) along the narrow tracks. Passengers who have been shoved inside by white-gloved Djinn, and who have failed in the struggle for minimal seating, are squashed tightly against each other. The groping hands of Servitors of Theft and Lust are rife. But passengers must be careful how they react – the other person may be of higher rank.

A thick fog of sweat and corruption and ozone hangs in the air, stifling and dense. Station announcements whine over the loudspeakers, unintelligible (except for the odd





“disaster” and “crash” and “five-year plan”) and annoying. A backbeat of tuneless elevator music plays, dissolving from time to time into the creak and hiss of worn-out tapes. Sometimes an ominous voice intones, “Use caution crossing the the gap,” shortly before pale tentacles reach out toward the platforms from beneath the rails, trying to ensnare and suck down any undefended passengers. (The common theory is that they are Shedim, gone Renegade and still not yet caught. Uniformed squads regularly investigate with electrical guns.)

The walls are plastered with posters, gaudy and eye-scarring. They offer everything from the latest sensation to the newest restaurant and the most exotic display, all at a special low price, all aimed for the consumer currently trapped on the Metro. Workers can often be seen slapping up new posters over the old ones. No posters are ever removed. The walls are, by the latest measurement, about five inches closer than they used to be.

Street-hawkers and entertainers seize the chance to pester the crowd, selling gim-cracks and providing entertainment. Souls and imps or gremlins try and sell their services to anybody who will buy, jostling in the mob. Only the truly desperate among demons look for employment here. It is rumored that Renegades hide in the mob, and that one Habbalite of the Game has spent the last 70 years riding the trains, never emerging.

When the Metro was first built, at the end of the 19th century, the Servitors of Technology were called in to help provide the necessary machinery and assistance. They’ve stayed involved ever since, bringing

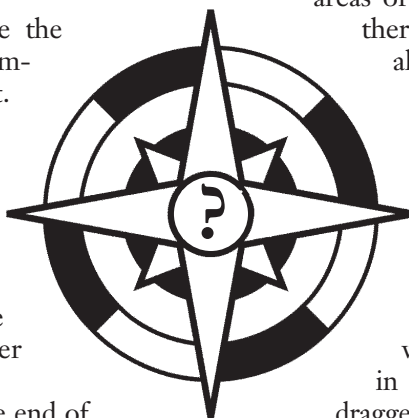
in new updates and gadgets. They’ve even provided electronic signs with up-to-the-minute information on what trains are currently running, and what routes are currently in service. Again, popular opinion – paranoid and prejudiced as it is – theorizes that the electronic signs transmit subliminals to the captive audience. The signs themselves are *usually* working, and *usually* viewable without causing migraines.

Maps of the Metro routes are regularly updated by the Servitors of Kronos, who have valuable experience in the matter from their Master’s own Archives. (This is considered a punishment detail for such Servitors.) The maps resemble a spider’s web, dipped in fluorescent ink, in three dimensions, produced by an arachnid operating in zero gravity while heavily dosed with PCP. Imps or gremlins who actually prove able to *understand* them are often recruited by Fate.

It is said that some Metro stations are in the deeper areas of Hell, and that a demon who ends up there may gain audience with Lucifer. It is also said that some stations are in the Marches, or in Heaven itself. Such rumors are given the contempt that they deserve, and remarkably few trains go missing, never to be heard of again.

Escalators whirr and chug their way up and down from the streets of Shal-Mari, their black surfaces unpleasantly warm and sticky to the touch. Occasionally in the distance a soul can be seen being dragged down into them, and his screams echo as

he disappears into the grinding maws. It is safer to travel in groups, as the escalators only attack if they scent weakness.



In a typical Metro station (there are some hundreds of stations scattered through Shal-Mari) there will be half a dozen ticket booths at the entrance. At least one of the booths is always shut. The facade is plated to withstand anything up to and including heavy weaponry. The ticket-sellers are behind bullet-proof glass, with only a narrow opening to pass Essence through and tickets back. They have little opportunity to indulge in private business, given their position – though if somebody could suggest something, they are as greedy as any demon in Hell. They will gladly report passengers to Security on the flimsiest of excuses. Nearby is a monitor room, from which a Djinn watches the station through the ubiquitous cameras and directs Security where they are needed.

Each Metro station is manned by demons of the Prince who is primary in that area of Shal-Mari. In places where the authority is mixed, or subject to shifts, this can result in the station staff being replaced overnight. New staff, naturally, may not know all the ins and outs of the station's geography or procedures . . . Old staff may never be heard from again.

On the Metro platforms, Security teams (usually Djinn or Calabim) come by every half-hour to check the area. They are supposed to clear away any entertainers or vendors who may be annoying the public – but can, of course, be bribed to look the other way. They may be summoned to break up a *large-scale* brawl, but are unlikely to interfere in a small private scuffle. Some Security teams operate on the trains, working their way down the carriages and dealing with disturbances. They will *not* interfere with high-ranking demons or Servitors of the Game.



The nerve center of the entire Metro is located somewhere underground, and can only be reached via the Metro itself. Nobody on the surface is quite sure which building it lies under, despite numerous attempts with explosives. The controller of the system is a Djinn of Technology, Tzammash, who has not left the Headquarters since they were built. He receives daily reports from all the Metro stations, and coordinates building work and repairs and staff assignments. His *obsession* is that the Metro keep on running, come wind, flood, or Armageddon. His worst nightmare is of an earthquake, unlikely as that would be. He occasionally uses expendable agents – such as people arrested for disturbing Security – to investigate odd happenings in the Metro tunnels, or at abandoned stations.

SUFFERING SUCCOTASH

The Balseraph loomed over the cucumber like a giant adder, leathery wings shivering. Slowly he added drops of vinegar down the long cut in its side.

A damned soul crouched next to the cucumber, holding it perfectly still. Suddenly she pursed her lips. "Ooooh . . . I think I heard it whimper."

In keeping with the great tradition of catering to *every* taste in food, no matter how depraved or how strange, restaurants in Shal-Mari struggle to come up with new fads. Every sidewalk cafe attempts to invent some totally new taste that will excite the palate of the jaded gourmets, and win the favor of the Prince of Gluttony. Some ideas are stranger than others.

The latest invention from a minor sidewalk cafe (which has renamed itself in honor of the event) is either a work of genius or a total waste of time. Bluntly, the idea of torturing souls before dining on them is dull, boring, and has been done for the last 1,000 years . . . so Betharabah, the Shedite chef, has come up with the concept of torturing the *vegetables*. As it eloquently puts it, "There's an Archangel of Flowers, and she loves plants, so *clearly* torturing them has to be a good idea!"

Torturing plants is a time-consuming and delicate matter. The crude type of demon merely plunges them into boiling water, or throws them into a pan of hot oil. More refined and sadistic demons may slowly chop them to pieces, inch by inch, or apply hot sauces and relishes. (Scoffers who claim that this is nothing more than *cooking* are shown the error of their ways, with some of the spare boiling water, frying oil, and knives.) Aficionados claim that they can actually hear tiny screams from the plants as they rip them apart and brutalize them.

The demons are deluding themselves – they can't *really* hurt the plants. However, the restaurant has become a current fad, and has a lot of human servants and waiters. The damned souls are delighted to find a place where it isn't currently fashionable to torture humans during the meal. They'll agree with any opinions the demonic diners state, flattering their abilities grossly. Just as long as *they* aren't the ones on the plates, they'll say anything and do anything to keep it that way.

Eventually this fad will pass, and the restaurant will lapse back into banality, and the entire torturing-vegetables fashion will be replaced by something equally thrilling. But for the moment, a lot of demons are working on new ways to cause a lettuce pain.

Betharabah

Every day, Betharabah scrubs itself with vinegar and garlic, in an attempt to hide its natural Shedite smell. It spends the day hovering over pans and chopping-boards,

putting the final touches on dishes, and ordering the human servants to assist the diners with the vegetables of their choice. Too proud and jealous to take on any equal assistance, the Shedite is being hopelessly overrun by new customers, and it's only a matter of time before something goes embarrassingly wrong. A couple of colleagues down the street are willing to try and make sure that something *does* go embarrassingly wrong, *soon*. As the fad for vegetable-torturing has spread, Betharabah has tried to stay ahead of fashion by providing more exotic implements of torture and rarer vegetables. It would pay a significant fee to get its tentacles on some of the rumored genetically spliced vegetables from Tartarus.

"I see it! The fate approaches on eight legs, six wings rising, with a golden head and feet of clay! It speaks! It tells me of the coming of death! Death! Ah bab bab bab!"

THE TALKING HEADS

"Speak, o dead soul!" the Habbalite intoned, gesturing wildly. Some of the scars along his arm ripped open again. "Bring to us the word of Death, from beyond death, and answer this Calabite's question. How may he kill his commander and rise in power?"

Silence filled the cave. The Calabite watched intensely as the limbless, battered body at the end of the row opened insane eyes and began to mutter wildly.

In Abaddon, a group of demons of Death have a new and interesting occupation – they've set themselves up as the keepers of a group of oracles. Believing that their Prince's Word is the highest form of truth, they assume that the dead themselves must be most in touch with the universe.

They have therefore collected a number of dead souls, and removed their arms and legs (the better to focus their minds). The demons keep the still-living heads and torsos in a grotto near the Bone Citadel, and charge all comers a fee of two Essence for prophecies. The querist pays the Essence, and chooses a soul from the collection to give him a prophecy. The soul is fed one point of the Essence, and encouraged to say something in response. (If any of the souls have Essence left at the end of the day, an Impudite in the group charms it out of them and shares it around.)

The souls are mostly insane, given their circumstances (being a quadriplegic torso in Abaddon does little for sanity) and babble randomly in response to the questions. This is enough for the demons seeking wisdom, who try to find some meaning in the soul's ravings.

The entire operation is small-scale, with only half a dozen regular "oracles." Souls that consistently fail to deliver useful prophecies – or prophecies that can be interpreted as useful – are thrown to Saminga's Force-collectors, and new souls are collected. So far, all souls used have been from Abaddon, though some of the demons running the operation are starting to consider collecting a few from other Principalities. It probably wouldn't be that difficult to smuggle some souls across the border, after all.

The grotto where the souls are kept has a short, defensible tunnel leading to it. (The demons are afraid that "their" souls may be stolen by Force-collecting squads of Saminga looking for an easy target.) A couple of imps keep watch, and warn their masters in the grotto of anybody approaching.

Nobody of high rank has paid any attention to the grotto yet, but among low-rank demons it's beginning to attract a steady flow of attention. It seems as good an idea for getting insights in Hell as anything else, and some demons even claim that the prophecies they were given *worked*.

Konstans, Habbalite of Death, Keeper of the Oracle

The entire operation is run overtly by Konstans, a Habbalite whose strong beliefs gave him the "revelation" of oracles through death. Utterly convinced that he is an angel and working for God, he is also quite sure that his captive "oracles" are delivering prophecies as true as those of Gabriel. Enough demons believe him so far that the Essence keeps flowing.

Vithik, Balseraph of Death, Profiteer

The *actual* power behind the operation is Vithik, a Balseraph who thinks the whole "oracle" notion is ridiculous, but who sees it as a way to make some Essence. He lets Konstans make religious pronouncements and take care of the "oracles," while he collects the Essence from the visiting demons. Utterly cynical, he nevertheless mouths all the right cant and pretends to believe in the "oracles." So far he hasn't managed to skim very much off the top, but he's hoping that as trade picks up he'll be able to take a greater percentage of the profits.

LOCATIONS IN THE MARCHES



LOCATIONS IN THE MARCHES

THE NAMING OF DOMAINS

It is frequently necessary for those celestials active in the Marches to have a way to specify individual dreams and domains. If a celestial cannot precisely identify a particular dreamscape or domain, it may be impossible to locate it when needed. The Servitors of both Beleth and Blandine are said to have their own complex systems of nomenclature to handle this difficulty.

Those large Domains formed from human belief and containing their own native Ethereals have already been named – either by the humans or by their inhabitants. These include places like Olympus, Arcadia, and so on.

Smaller Domains are usually named by the concept that they embody, such as “The Eternal Bus Station,” or some unique feature they possess, like “That place where everything turns to melted chocolate.” However, it can sometimes be more difficult to accurately label those larger, longer-lasting Domains to which many dreamers have contributed: the variety of viewpoints and contributions often leave the dreamscape in a state of constant flux. Perhaps Yves could give the ultimate Name for such a location – but most celestials must settle for a less-accurate “use name.”

Tiny Domains, formed by a single dream with no other contributors, rarely last long enough to *need* a name. When necessary, it is common to identify such a transient dreamscape (for the duration that it exists) by the dreamer who formed it.

Ethereals native to a particular dreamscape or Domain use the language of the dreamers who created it. They also have their own tongue, which is comprehensible to any dreamer inside the dreamscape – after all, one always understands what is being said in a dream.

TRAVELING BETWEEN DOMAINS

There is *no* firm geography in the Marches. It is even stranger than Heaven or Hell, as the humans who dream the Domains hardly do it by planned committee. The Ethereals who control Domains cannot *force* them into conjunction with particular others. The most that they can do is protect their borders, and occasionally guard passages across neutral territory for as long as the Domains remain in the same position.

This is the main problem – Domains *move* with relation to each other, controlled by the swells of human dreams. With a sudden surge of belief, a Domain may find itself swept from the edges of the Far Marches toward the boundaries of the Vale, growing in strength. A change in perceptions or opinions may force two other

Domains into conjunction. For instance, a sudden rise in the popularity of vampire elf stories, and the resulting dreams thereof, may cause Arcadia’s boundaries to impact with those of several Domains which focus on vampires. This will not last for long, but is clearly a difficulty to people trying to navigate the Marches. (The Guardians of the Vale (*The Marches*, p. 92) are usually aware of recent Domain movements along the boundaries of the Vale, where their patrols lie.)

For these reasons, navigating in the Far Marches is best done by *concept*. Similar Domains often lie near each other – and often *absorb* each other. If a celestial is searching for some particular Domain with a particular theme, a good way to do so is to find one Domain with that theme and then check its neighbors. Another option is that of a native guide; Ethereals who travel outside their home Domains have some idea of the local geography. There are no definite fixed paths and highways connecting Domains, although there are some roads created by *concept*, such as the Dry River (p. 122), which are Domains in themselves.

Ximenes squinted across the empty landscape.

“Very grey,” the Impudite commented. “So what’s this place called?”

“Shut up, Iohan,” the Habbalite muttered.

Iohan patted his companion on the back. “Calm down. Relax, OK? We’ll get there. You’ve got your map. Point us at wherever and let’s get going.”

Ximenes sighed. “It’s not that simple. For the moment, we need to look for Domains that are fae or forest. Those should do for starting parameters. When we find something that fits those specifications, then we try to clarify it down to Broceliande, because that should be a neighboring Domain. So don’t expect this to be easy.”

Iohan shrugged. “Well, I’m stuck with you till that Geas wears off. Just tell me . . .”

“Yes?”

“Does the Metro run out here?”

The areas between Domains may be filled with other Domains, or may simply be stretches of unformed sand and rock, shapeless and empty. Such undefined places are given shape as featureless wastelands by the minds of those who enter them. Once inside an unformed area, it can be hard to leave, as there are no landmarks – there is *nothing* to break the emptiness.

ETHEREAL LOCATIONS

ARACHNIDAE

The human wandered through the building, inspecting the sticky silk curtains on the walls. Unusual, he thought. This isn't like any dream I've been in before . . .

And then the giant spider lowered itself from above, mandibles clicking, and he screamed and ran.

Animals have dreams as well as humans, and those dreams can form Domains just like any others. Blandine and her angels protect those dreamscapes – even if they do not always understand them as well as the angels of Jordi would. One Domain that is stranger than most is that created by the dreams of spiders: Arachnidae.

Giant spiders build endless webs there over intricate arrangements of timber and stone, leaves and metal. The support structures are huge replicas of the normal objects to which spiders would anchor their webs. Giant flies and other insects buzz in the air, from time to time being ensnared and thrashing frantically as the juices are sucked from their bodies. In this Domain, a small spider is the size of a normal human, and a black widow spider or tarantula is much larger.

It is very rare for other forms of life to enter this dreamscape. Insects would view it as a nightmare, animals would simply not relate to it, and humans (apart from the odd entomologist) would certainly find it terrifyingly alien. The Servitors of Blandine have little need to care for it, though occasionally they patrol its borders to make sure that no Etherials are trying to intrude. There are certain spider myths, after all, such as the Hopi Indian tales of Grandmother Spider – enough to keep them alert.

What the Servitors of Dream don't realize is that a group of *demons* have started to use this Domain for their own purposes. In keeping with Beleth's aggressive policy toward the Marches, this group of Servitors of Nightmares are targeting lucid dreamers and Soldiers of

Blandine. If they catch a human wandering the Marches, they drag him to Arachnidae and throw him in, keeping him there for as long as possible. This lets them avoid making a disturbance by spending Essence, as Arachnidae is nightmarish to humans in itself. It also means that they don't have to risk carrying the human back across the patrolled border between Blandine and Beleth's Marches. The human in question, after several hours being hunted by giant spiders through clinging webs in an alien world, is very much the worse for wear . . .

This group has recently been growing more proactive, actually locating known Soldiers of Dream in the Corporeal world, then tracking them in the Marches. Should these Soldiers start going insane or having heart attacks, it would be very difficult to discover precisely where the danger is coming from . . . As yet, Beleth has not taken particular notice of their activities, and they're trying to build up a definite record of success before reporting to her.

Jordi would be outraged if he knew about the *defilement* of a dreamscape

Domain created by his animals. He would work with Blandine to defend the Domain by any means necessary, and to stamp out this idea before any more demons start trying similar approaches.

Pasdammin, Calabite of Nightmares, Group Leader

Pasdammin is frightening, even for a Calabite of Nightmares. It isn't just the pleasure he takes in breaking Soldiers of Dream, but the thrill he finds in turning an insect dreamscape into a vicious nightmare for the humans. The entire scheme was his idea. While he is the most powerful of the group, he relies on the Balseraph and the two Djinn who work with him to "handle" the Soldiers without damaging them too much. If he actually loses his temper and attacks, his *Berserk* Discord activates, and there's remarkably little Soldier left afterward to drive insane.



THE CAMP

*The Mercurian spread his wings. He hadn't expected the feathers to be quite so awkward, but then he was an **angel** now – and that made up for everything. He vaguely – only vaguely – remembered the voice of Novalis as she Redeemed him, and the sensations of bright colors and cool music. And now he stood among the golden spires, among angels, and soon he would be truly accepted. Once he had done penance, he would be one of them. What fools the demons had been, to claim that Heaven was even worse than Hell.*

In Hell, propaganda isn't just a state-sponsored activity, it's a way of life. Demons are created in a world that *believes* – for the most part – that Heaven is a despotism and that the demons are fighters for freedom and choice. Most sensible demons don't even consider alternatives like Heaven or Redemption, knowing too well what lies they are.

Such beliefs are instilled by propaganda from the moment of a demon's creation; in general conversation, all forms of the Media, and the public announcements by the Game. However, there are always demons who are going to recognize that propaganda *is* propaganda, and grow suspicious of it. These demons may start wondering whether they can believe anything they're told. But even such demons can be convinced by the accounts of clearly truthful fellow demons. Such witnesses will explain how they Redeemed and went up to Heaven, and discovered what a fundamentally cruel and false place it was. They managed to escape, and now warn all their friends and neighbors never to even *consider* such a thing. Their shock and horror is testimony to anybody who meets them.

The entire system that produces this end result – referred to as "The Camp" by those who know about it – is the result of work by Kronos, Asmodeus, and Beleth.

More recently, Vapula and Nybbas have been brought into the system. Other Princes are aware of it, but do not usually have their Servitors take an active role in the process.

The Camp is located on the Dark side of the Far Marches, and has existed for over 500 years. It was once the Domain of a now-extinct pantheon of deities who were worshipped by a Slavic tribe (also now extinct). It has carefully been sculpted, through the long-term efforts of Servitors of Nightmares, into a facsimile of Heaven – gold and ivory buildings and all.

Of course, there are a few *small* changes.

The demons and damned souls who populate the Camp are all disguised as angels – or rather, as the common demonic perception of angels. Thus, Malakim are bloodthirsty lunatics covered in chains and always carrying weapons, Mercurians are white-feathered fluffy idiots with the mental capacity of a Barbie doll, and so on. Damned souls (selected from the best hypocrites in Hades) masquerade as blessed souls, and are rewarded by being spared from torture – as long as they play the part. Imps and gremlins take the roles of relievers.

The major areas that are known to be in the true Heaven have been duplicated in the Camp – again, with changes. Jean's Halls of Progress have become a mansion of scientific experimentation and torture worthy of Vapula. Novalis' Glade is a hangout for ineffectual flower-picking angels who do nothing but dance in circles. The Council Spires have all the perversions that a demonic mind might expect of Judgment. Jordi's Savannah is populated by vicious animals that delight in tearing pieces off the "newly-Redeemed." The streets and buildings are of gold and ivory under an eternally harsh sun, and the entire city is surrounded by a desert that appears endless.





Naturally, any reasonably intelligent or strong-willed demon would see holes in this. Such demons are *not* chosen as subjects for the process. Suitable targets must be serving on Earth, and will be demons with low Will and Perception who have made the mistake of publicly expressing interest either in going Renegade or Redeeming. The Intelligence of such candidates varies. Many are of low Intelligence – that way they are both easily convinced, and nobody would believe that they could have invented their stories. Some candidates, however, are of *high* Intelligence, with a leaning toward depression, paranoia, and conspiracy theory. Such demons are likely not only to believe the worst, but also to invent their own reasons for minor lapses in consistency. (Balseraphs are strong candidates here.) Demons sent to the Camp may be of any type, *except* for Lilim – as every demon *knows* (thanks to the omnipresent propaganda) that Lilim are destroyed if they try to Redeem.

Targets are quietly kidnapped and heavily drugged. They're transported to the central processing station of the operation on Earth (*Dellman's*, p. 26). Once there, they are subjected to a routine of subliminals and drug doses, intended to confuse them and make them believe that they *have* Redeemed. (None of them, after all, are going to know what Redemption is really like. It is

described to them, while they are under the drugs, as being a state of happiness, pretty colors, and sweet music. Usually Novalis or Eli is described as being the Archangel who Redeemed them.) They are then shipped through a Tether of Beleth's (using Will-shackles or similar Relics) up to the Marches, still drugged, and taken across the Marches to the Camp. (Before the current availability of drugs and technology, the conditioning was done by means of multiple application of Balseraph and Habbalite resonances).

When the demons wake up at the Camp, they are under the belief that they have Redeemed. Their self-image, therefore, will be that of an angel – albeit one that comes from the usual demonic images of angels. An Impudite who believes that she is now a Mercurian is not going to look as truly glorious as a genuine Mercurian. (Balseraphs are particularly vulnerable to this, given their ability at self-deceit. Habbalah are less vulnerable, as they always *knew* they were angels, so are less inclined to believe they have been “Redeemed.”) However, everybody around them will *tell* them that they are angels, will *behave* to them as though they are angels . . . A demon who actually wanted to Redeem, and apparently now finds himself in his fondest dream, is unlikely to ask too many awkward questions.

The “newly-Redeemed” are housed in a location called the Hospice (which has no parallel in the genuine Heaven) near the “Glade.” They are told that they are not to try and use their resonances until they are fully accustomed to Heaven. They are given improving (and boring) texts to read, and are told that they are to behave in submissive and humble manners until they have fully expiated their past sins. They are then systematically abused, in between having a woolly-minded fluffiness of “loving the entire universe” preached at them. Sometimes they are auctioned off to particular “Archangels” for further training. (This takes place under the auspices of “Marc,” widely known to the entire demonic host to be a slave-trader and pimp.)

Only a small number of “subjects” are being processed at any given moment – 20 at the most. While this is going on, they are being monitored by Habbalah, and by Balseraphs of Fate with angelic resonances, who can check the mental state of the “newly-Redeemed.” They can thus gauge the amount of abuse necessary to truly break the subject’s faith in Heaven and God, and drive them to the point of wanting to escape to Hell. (Different subjects may require different stimuli, or different levels of abuse. Some may only need a month’s treatment to realize the horror of the place, while others may take a year or more to snap. A few demons have actually become truly convinced that they are angels, and *believe* in the principles of love and submission – they were quietly disposed of as failures.)

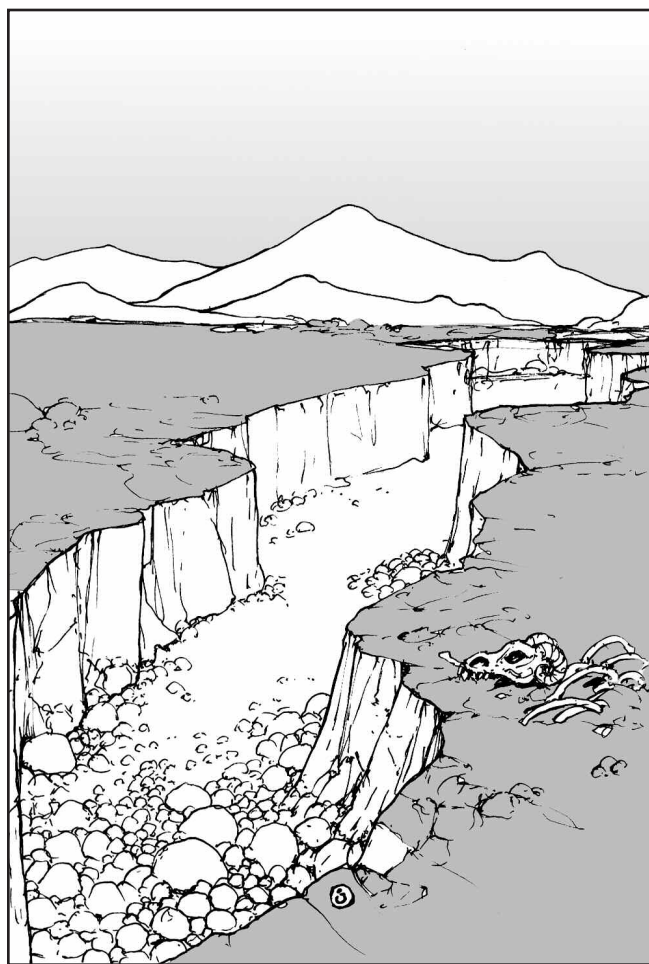
At this point, the subject is again drugged, and returned to Dellman’s, where they are subliminally told that they managed to escape. They are allowed to wake up in a nearby Tether to Hell, where they will usually beg the Seneschal to be allowed to return to their Prince. Once in Hell, happy to find themselves in their demonic forms, they will warn everyone against trying to reach Heaven. (Princes will spare their lives for a while, in acknowledgement of their “escape and return.” However, such demons tend not to live for long. If their new vehement belief in Hell doesn’t drive them into dangerous situations, they are liable to suffer fatal accidents “in the line of duty,” thus avoiding awkward questions. At all costs, these demons are kept away from genuine angels.)

Those demons assigned to run the Camp are not allowed to leave it – except for those in the very highest positions of authority. It is *vital* that no word of this place should ever reach the rest of Hell. If evidence should come to light of its existence, the entire staff would probably be slaughtered (together with any subjects present) and the place dismantled. (It could always be rebuilt later.) Most demons who have worked at the Camp for a while realize that they are doomed to spend the rest of their existence there, short of a miracle. As the place is not actually *unpleasant*, and as demons chosen for jobs there are

usually suited to the position, they tend to make the most of it, and take it out on their subjects. While they could make a run for it across the Far Marches, there are guards on the walls, and there are spies inside the Camp, and their names would instantly be on Asmodeus’ “Most Wanted” list . . .

Treatments for the subjects are scripted by Balseraphs, usually, to fit the subject’s beliefs about God and Heaven. There is an entire part of the Camp that the subjects never see – cellars and corridors behind the gold and ivory walls, administration offices, briefing rooms. The demons working there are forbidden to take their natural form under *any* circumstances, in case a subject should manage to wander into a restricted area.

From time to time, an “Archangel” has to appear. Such roles are taken by senior demons of the Camp, and are played for full demonic prejudice. Thus, Novalis is a bimbo, Eli is a drunken layabout, Yves is senile, Laurence is a psychopath . . . There is hot competition to actually play the parts, and some of the demons at the Camp have favorite roles. Aceldama (see below) in particular likes to take the role of Gabriel . . .



The groups of guards who bring unconscious subjects to and from the Camp take great care to keep the route secret. The path *may* lie through the land of the Fae, and through the Mexican land of the dead . . . or then again, it may not, as Beleth has it changed every so often. It actually enters the Camp through the “Caverns of David” beneath, making it very unlikely that any inmates could find their way out by accident. Asmodeus regularly sends teams to the Camp, to check the loyalty of the demons working there.

The Archangels have strong suspicions that a place such as this exists, though evidence is sparse and mostly supposition. If its location should be identified, or if somebody could trace a subject to it, Blandine would be the first to detail a squad of angels to investigate and destroy it. The other Archangels would not be far behind. They would also want to make its existence public to Hell, as it would interest a great many demons. Possible ways that have been discussed to locate it involve spotting a “candidate,” and then attuning a Cherub to him so that he could be tracked, or substituting an angel of appropriate Choir. This would, of course, be an extremely dangerous mission. The option of simply searching the entire Far Marches or attempting to ambush convoys to the Camp has been rejected, as Blandine doesn’t want to risk her Malakim without clues on insufficient evidence. Give her some *facts* on its location, however . . .



Lachish, Commander of the Camp

Lachish was a Seraph of Eli, Fallen some thousand years ago to become a Balseraph of Kronos. (He takes a vindictive pleasure from portraying “Eli” for the subjects.) His motto is, “Art is Life,” and he believes that in the Camp, he is creating life out of art. If seen in natural form, his once-white wings and body are a mixture of shifting rainbow shades. He rarely takes a part in the actual treatment of subjects, unless called upon to impersonate an Archangel, but briefs all new workers at the Camp. He is responsible to the Princes for the continued good running of the Camp, and knows that he will be the first to die if the place is destroyed.

Aceldama, Lachish’s Enforcer

Aceldama is a Calabite of Belial, and is totally insane. She serves Lachish loyally as a personal torturer, assistant, and second-in-command. She is not often allowed to deal with subjects directly, as her mania often leads her to do them great harm. Instead, she supervises demons at the Camp, and punishes those who offend Lachish. Her mania for Gabriel has actually led her to start trying to find out more about Gabriel, and in consequence she is beginning to approach the edges of heresy – despite her work at the Camp. Lachish, always watching for treason elsewhere, has noticed nothing in his closest associate.

THE COUNTRY OF THE TEIND

*And pleasant is the fairy land
For those that in it dwell,
But once in every seven years
They pay a tithe to Hell . . .*

— **Tam Lin**, *Anonymous*

Every seven years Beleth receives a tithe from the fae. This is referred to in old folk-songs and stories, and known as the “Teind” to scholars and folklorists. Of course, such people would be unlikely to believe that such things were *real*, or still existed and continued . . .

In the shadow of Beleth’s Tower lies a country. It does not lie close to it in any geographical sense, but the shadow of the Tower of the Princess of Nightmares blocks the sun forever. This country borders on the Far Marches and the Vale equally, and its inhabitants are corruptions of the fae. The Unseelie Court (or the Winter Court, or the Night Court) existed long before the Purity Crusade, and still exists, paired with the Seelie Court, independent of Beleth. This is something else, and something more purely evil.

The fae who are sent to Beleth are selected by random lot – but sometimes the random selection is rigged. Those who displease the royalty of Faerie often end up being chosen as living sacrifices to Hell . . . though of course, none in Faerie would ever dare make accusations. Every seven years, the procession of different sorts of fae – elves, goblins, ogres, redcaps, dryads, and unicorns – makes its way across the Marches toward Beleth’s Tower. There are often casualties en route. Beleth accepts this as natural attrition, if she is in a good humor. If not, she will send a message to Faerie requiring further inhabitants.

Beleth’s audience with the tribute fae is attended by some of the more powerful of her Servitors. She gives a Force to each of the fae whom she considers strong enough to be of use to her – weaklings are torn apart for Forces and Essence. The Forces that she gives are from her own being, and suffused with her personality and Word. A fae who accepts such a Force becomes stronger, but also warped toward Nightmares.

Such twisted creatures are permitted to make homes in the Country of the Teind, when they are not pursuing mortal dreamers in the Dark Marches. While the Ethereals of Arcadia would dearly love to spread into the Vale to batten on mortal dreamers, angels and demons bar their way. The Guardians, and other angels, guard Blandine’s Marches – and Beleth is very definite that only *her* fae should prey on her Marches. She may make a few exceptions, but only for entities whose cruelty and capacity for causing fear have won her respect.

This does not mean that the corrupted fae are shown any respect by demons, or friendship, or trust. They’re

“Have no fear,” the Seraph said. “Zubeyla here will accompany you.” He indicated the Cherub standing beside them. “She will keep you safe in the most dangerous parts of the Marches.”

The Mercurian folded his arms. “So who keeps her safe? And do I get even the option of volunteering for this one? And just how insane is your target if he’s running off to the fae in the Far Marches, anyhow?”

The Seraph gestured vaguely with a wing. “I’ve sent word ahead to the Guardians of the Crag. They should be able to help you. Besides, weren’t you the one telling me about how you’d been across the Marches and back again?”

“Merely corroborative detail,” the Mercurian muttered despondently.

equally despised by their kin of Arcadia, who view them as polluted outcasts. (On a very few occasions, fae from Arcadia have come in search of their cousins who were tribute. Beleth *enjoys* meeting such seekers.) Turning on their mortal victims, and on each other, the tribute fae are bitter and savage, and claim to any they meet that they are the *true* fae of Arcadia.

The Country of the Teind is as cold as the hearts of the corrupted fae who live there. Fires give no warmth, and what light there is comes from no earthly sun, nor any earthly starlight. The shadow of Beleth’s Tower lies like a finger of plague across the land. The more rustic fae – ogres, goblins, redcaps, and the like – live in crude villages, or in the dark woods and mountains that scar the country. In the lakes hide kelpies and other man-eating creatures. The cities contain their more urban cousins, elves and boggans and such beings. The entire Country *crawls* with corrupted beings from Arcadia, whose only relief is in tormenting human dreamers – or each other.

Beleth views the Country of the Teind with a certain degree of pride. To her it’s a little work of art, and the best part about it is that the corrupted fae increase its horror all by themselves. She doesn’t have to worsen its reputation among mortals, or send in demons to order its inhabitants to further cruelties – they do that perfectly well on their own. The place darkens the concept of the fae which mortals have, and in the Marches, image is everything. It drains off power that might reach the true Arcadia, and weakens that place yet further. Beleth’s occasional pleasure is to send in an offending demon – or better yet, a captured *angel* – and leave him to the mercies of the fae. The fae themselves are aware that such a being could only be there as a direct punishment from Beleth, and enjoy being able to torment one of their usual tormentors.

The particular delight of the corrupted fae is to manage to snare a human soul out in the Vale, and bring it back to their Country. Beleth has no objection to this – they do, after all, lie within Nightmares – as long as they do not steal *too* many souls from her demons. On a few occasions, the fae have even managed to sneak into Blandine's half of the Marches in order to drag a victim back with them. Usually the angels of Dream drive them back, but once or twice they have had to pursue the fae all the way to the Country of the Teind, and even within its borders.

There still exist some Teind fae who wish to return to the *true* Arcadia. While they may be as dark-hearted as the demons of Nightmare, they dream of their homeland and of a life when they were not subject to Hell. They may try to escape from the Country of the Teind, and make their way across the Vale and the Far Marches, seeking Arcadia once more.

Even if they find their way home, they will probably be refused entry for fear of angering Beleth. They become wanderers and brigands, unable to return to Beleth's territories for fear of public execution for treason. Still, there are legends of fae who managed to return home to Arcadia and lived in peace for centuries, leaving behind the taint of Nightmares.

Broggan, Wandering Troll

Broggan was born among the Unseelie, and has never denied that he is a creature of humanity's fears. He's the big ugly thing under the bridge that preys on travelers, but who can be bypassed through clever riddling. Angst and philosophy aren't his strong points – he likes the taste of human flesh. He thought that he could cope with being included in the tribute to Beleth seventy years ago. However, the Country of the Teind revolts him, and the corruption endemic among his brothers even more so. He isn't a creature of torture, or cruelty – he only eats when he is hungry, and then sleeps. After long stonelike years of endurance, he is finally looking for a way back to Arcadia. He's given no outward sign of treason as yet, being intelligent enough to know what would happen to him if he did, but will cooperate with anybody who can offer him a route out of Beleth's reach. He would even help *angels* with information or in a fight, if they could put him on the path to Arcadia.

THE CRAGS OF THE GUARDIANS OF THE VALE

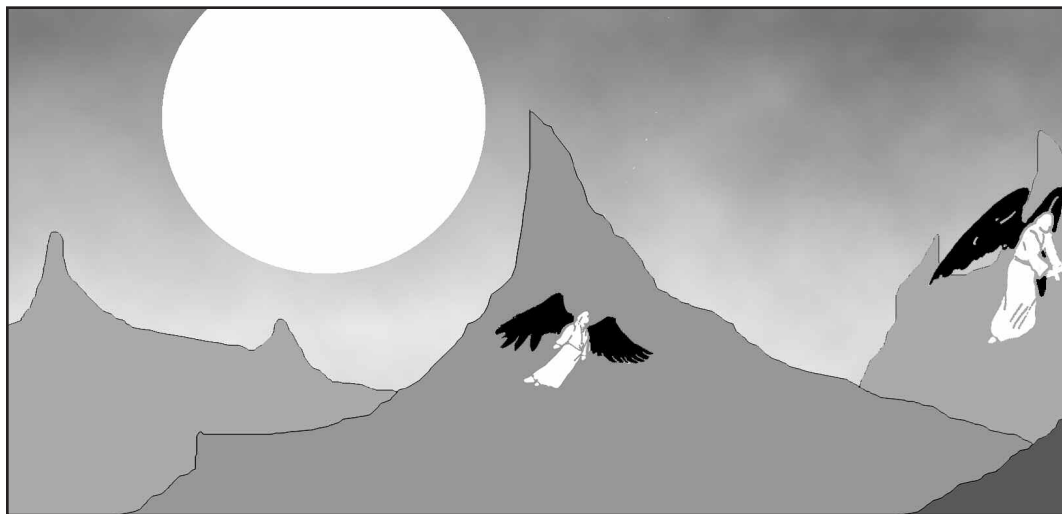
A cold wind rushed down from the clawlike peaks above, carrying the dark-winged Malakim along with it like winter leaves in a storm. The Mercurian huddled closer to the Cherub, shivering unconsciously.

The boundaries of the Far Marches stretch an infinite distance, as far as the reaches of the human mind. No single Domain boundary can ever be measured, and thus the sum of the infinite Domains is greater still. The Guardians of the Vale, all Malakim of the Sword (*The Marches*, p. 92), who watch along these borders are scattered along the length of the Vale in small groups or singly, seldom gathering in any one place.

However, when they *do* meet in conclave, or to have orders passed to them, it is at the Crag. These dark mountains lift like blades against the sky, harsh and barren, scoured by the wind. (Demons whisper that they are fit places for the accursed Servitors of the Sword, and as cold as their hearts.) The Guardians rest in those eyries briefly before returning to their patrols, looking out over the Vale to one side and the Far Marches to the other.

Most of the Guardians were once Servitors of Uriel, and took part in the Purity Crusade, slaughtering Ethereals across the Marches. The remaining Guardians are trusted Servitors of the Sword, who have proven through their service and loyalty that they can complete their duty. Those who might have sympathy with the Ethereals cannot be permitted to serve here, as absolute dedication to the cause of Heaven is required.

However, given the length of time that some of the Malakim have served here, and given the fact that they



are in constant proximity to the Ethereals, they have developed more *tolerance* than other Malakim might have for such beings. Just as the Servitors of Michael have some respect for the Servitors of Baal – or vice versa – the Guardians too have been forced to “know their enemy.” The Guardians rank as experts on the Ethereal Domains, and could even excel most Servitors of Blandine on the subject. While they certainly don’t make *friends* on their patrols, they do become acquainted with the beings who guard the Domains from their side. They become even more closely acquainted with Ethereals who try to slip across the borders.

The Guardians patrol in groups of two to four most of the time, only flying alone when that area of border is relatively safe. Courage is all very well, but Ethereals often aren’t honorable and could easily mob a solitary angel before he could summon help. Their commander Tahariel, a Friend of the Lord’s Troops, assigns patrol routes and areas to be covered. While there are few precise times or distances – this is, after all, the Marches – there is a given time by which point a patrol should report back or send a message. Most of the Guardians have the Celestial Song of Tongues, in case of emergencies. If a patrol completely vanishes, then a larger group will be sent to investigate the area where they were last reported.

The eyries among the crags consist of simple stonework, worn down by the winds over the passing centuries. They appear dark and featureless on the outside, but inside the walls are covered with endless carvings. The emblem of the sword is repeated time and time again, surrounded by angelic script for Laurence’s name – and for Uriel’s. As the years have gone by, the Guardians have carved the walls again and again, to a level that many would regard as obsessive.

There are no paper records in the entire place – the Guardians remember anything that needs remembering, and if it is forgotten, well, clearly it wasn’t that important. One thing that they do all know is each other’s patrol areas. In the case of an emergency, or if one particular Guardian was being looked for, the others would all know the general area in which he operated.

There are few Guardians at the Craggs at any given time, as they are constantly on patrol. However, a few always remain there for short periods, for purposes of coordination or healing from wounds. Many Ethereals or Servitors of Nightmares have considered attacking the Craggs from time to time, and certainly it would be a famous victory if they *could* storm the place. The Malakim are not stupid, however – the Craggs are ideally sited for defense, given that they are dangerous cliffs which can only be reached by flying.

There is one secret that Tahariel keeps even from Laurence, his own Archangel, and shares only with other Malakim who were once of Purity. Those Malakim who are only of the Sword are not told of this. Beneath the central eyrie in the Craggs, under a slab of plain unmarked stone, rests a sword that was once wielded by Uriel. Tahariel and the others have not touched it – they would not *dare*. They keep it secret from Laurence, because they believe that if he were *meant* to have found it and to have taken up Uriel’s task, then he would have done so already. This, to them, is not a matter of honor or dishonor – it simply *is*. They believe that Uriel, or an avatar of Uriel, will return some day and take up his sword again, and that he will unite them with the Tsayadim. He will then lead the final Crusade that will cleanse the Marches, and bring Purity even to the gates of Hell at last. But God works as God wills, and there will be no hastening that day – and so they wait, patiently.



As matters stand, the Guardians simply do not have the numbers to be able to intercept most of the entities passing into or out of the Far Marches. Tahariel has frequently requested more Malakim from Laurence, but Laurence considers Earth a higher priority. Angels who notify the Guardians beforehand of their journey to Dreams will be met, and given any due warnings or information. Demons caught in passage will be slain. Ethereals will be turned back if they are intercepted either through threats or force, but occasionally minor ones – ethical ones whose only purpose was to look after humans – slip past. Some Guardians are more lenient than others.

*“The rocks shelter us, the wind bears us up,
our oaths bind us in honor – what more
should we need? We have purpose. We guard
the dreamers, and for that reason,
we endure.”*

– Tahariel, Malakite of the Sword

The Guardians have no formal system of rank or order, despite being Malakim of the Sword. They all acknowledge Tahariel as commander, but other than that they count each other as equals. Their style of armor is old-fashioned and their blades are classic longswords, apart from the very few who have joined their ranks more recently. Their manner of speech is also archaic, though sprinkled with the odd modern expression from recent dreams. They bear themselves with dignity, and expect other angels to give them due respect.

Pasach, Malakite of the Sword, Guardian of the Vale

Pasach was assigned to the Guardians by Laurence a century ago, after 800 years of dedicated service to the Sword. He is proud of the responsibility that he has been given, and is still very much the “new boy on the block” – the others, after all, have been there so much longer. His patrol area includes (but is not limited to) the borders of Olympus and Arcadia, and he travels with a couple of older Malakim, once of Purity. He won’t tolerate any Ethereal escaping the Far Marches, and pursues his duty with zeal, challenging every being that he meets. Once or twice he has had the sense that some of the other Guardians were keeping a secret from him, but he rejects such thoughts, having fought beside his brothers and knowing their honor.

THE DRY RIVER

The Cherub turned to the Mercurian. “How far is it?” They had been walking down the arid riverbed for a while now, and the banks rose above their heads. There was no actual shadow, just as there was no actual light; everything had a gray, dead quality to it.

The Mercurian twitched his wings in a shrug. “We’ll get there when we get there. It’s either this, or try and find our way directly . . .”

He cut off as a ripple of gravel came slithering down from above and to the right. A voice called, “This is the border to Broceliande! Let no man pass without our Queen’s permission.”

The Mercurian smiled at the Cherub. “Well, I got you here. You did say that you had an invitation, right?”

In many dreams and images, a dried-up riverbed is a symbol for death or endings. In the Marches, this endlessly-repeated image has acquired its own validity.

There is a riverbed, dry and cracked, that runs through the Marches. It cannot be plotted on a map, as there is no constant geography there. It cannot be defined by distance, as there is no definite scale. It is interrupted by mountains and cliffs, and covered at times by sand, and filled by the jewel-bubbles of dreamscapes. But it borders on many realms, passing through the Far Marches, and it is a known meeting-place for many people.

The Dry River can serve as a simple boundary-line for some realms, with one side belonging to one group of Ethereals, and the other side belonging to some other group. It can be the end of a Domain of the Marches, leading to an empty cave in the rocks, with nothing defined beyond it. It can be the *beginning* of a Domain, or the only entry-point to one.

Domains are by no means laid out evenly along the River. Sometimes it may go for long stretches bordered only by the empty Marches. At other times the realms of different Ethereals are patched in non-Euclidean geometry along its banks. Each different Domain seems to occupy a broad swath of bank if examined closely, but if ignored, can be bypassed rapidly and left behind. Unless, of course, some force from that Domain wishes to reach outward . . .

Domains are not always contiguous on the Dry River. Sometimes they touch at different areas, or lose touch with it entirely. Sometimes their relation to *each other* slips, although they both border on the River. The geography of the Marches is an uncertain thing, and the only constant points are Heaven and Hell on either side.

Usually, a Domain that borders on the River sets watchers to guard those borders; these may be full Ethereals, or dream-shades. The guards may lie concealed on their side of the border, spying on travelers, or they may man the border more obviously, as a show of strength. It is rare for

a border on the Dry River to be *totally* unwatched, though it is possible, given that the Domains can move relative to each other.

The River is a convenient neutral meeting-ground and rendezvous, for those who want to meet outside some Domain. It has also been used as a staging-point for armies, in the past – another reason why the borders of Domains are watched. Legend has it that Uriel's legions of angels flew down its course during the Purity Crusade, laying waste to the realms that bordered it. Sometimes it is as wide and deep as the Nile, and sometimes as narrow and shallow as a deserted countryside ditch – but always dry, and always bare of vegetation. The River is rock and sand and dead air.

Most Ethereals know that the River is frequently used for assignations, meetings, and so on. This has resulted in many attempts at spying on travelers along the River – even kidnap, theft, and murder. However, the nature of the River itself makes it likely that attempts to use it practically will be unsuccessful. It's a symbol, not a public highway!

This does not stop travelers using it to find their way into Domains, or bandits and spies lurking along it for victims. But the River is a sere and empty place, carrying with it an atmosphere of hopelessness and endings. Travelers on it, even Celestials, must struggle with the feeling that they are journeying toward their deaths. Each step tempts depression and despair. Those who actually live *in* it, to prey on travelers, are rapidly drawn into nihilism and amorality, losing all hope. Such symbols as the River, engraved by millions of dreaming minds, are not lightly toyed with.

If somebody looks for the River, it is only found by chance. (However, the *best* place to try to stumble across it is along the borders of Ethereal Domains.) There are no signposts to it, and it has no fixed geographical points. Even Domains that previously touched the River may no longer have the same links to it.

The best-known group of bravos currently patrolling the River for prey is the group who call themselves, "The

Shadows." Clichéd as this title is, they *have* so far escaped the border guards, and the Servitors of Dreams and Nightmares. (Beleth would rather any such operations be carried out by *her* Servitors.) They are led by an enterprising fae from the Unseelie Domains, who styles himself "Lord Nightbane." He has managed to recruit followers from a number of Domains that border on the River. Whenever his group needs to hide, he has a colleague from that Domain negotiate with those border guards. He has also realized that staying on the River for too long at any one time is detrimental to mental health, and takes care to leave the River every few days. While this means his group is not as rich as they *might* be, since they miss targets this way, it has kept them sane and alive so far.

The Shadows themselves are a rag-tag group of Ethereals from different Domains, amoral and practical. They hope to find an artifact or information so important that they could bargain with a major power – and maybe even gain control of their own Domain in the Far Marches. For the moment, however, they're footpads and stalkers. While ruthless, they're not wasteful killers – if a captive can convince them that he's worth more alive than dead, they'll listen. While they center their operations on the Dry River, they can also be found elsewhere in the Marches.

Lord Nightbane

This soi-disant Lord is actually a common fae, Pwyll, who had no chance of gaining any power in the stratified society of the Courts. Knowing that nobody outside the Domain of the fae would have heard of him, he left and changed his name to something which he felt was more fear-inspiring. He knows that his title and the name of his group are stereotypical, but he hopes that living up to stereotypes may harvest them a little Essence. In the meantime, they're doing quite well for themselves. He's power-hungry and cold-blooded, because he remembers the low stratum of society from which he came. To him, no fate would be worse than having to *return* to such obscurity.

Juvenal was moving carefully so as not to reopen his wounds, and the Cherub was limping painfully as they made their way slowly down the dead riverbed.

"I don't get it," said Zubeyla, her voice weary. "What did he think he was going to do, anyhow, even if he had been right? And I know that thing they'd dug up wasn't really Magog. But what was it?"

The Mercurian coughed to clear his throat, and spat. "I don't know what he wanted to do. Or what that thing was. Only that it killed them both – and nearly us, too. But I do know one thing."

Zubeyla tilted her head expressively.

"That he was looking for Cruelty." Juvenal kept on walking. "And if you go looking for something – especially in the Marches – then, eventually, you'll find it."

ADVENTURE SEEDS



GENIUS LOCI

People talk about the spirit of a town, or a State, or a country – something formed by the ethos of the people who live there, and by their *love* for the place. Such things can and do exist – they’re ethereals, formed by the collective belief in them. Such a spirit is known as a *Genius Loci*.

And they can get *angry*.

The town in which this takes place was once known to be a center of industry, a place for hard-working and honest people to live. Areas of it are run-down, corrupted by demons or simply gone to rot through the greed and laziness of humans. People are ceasing to care about the town as a thing in itself, and with this loss of attention, the ethereal is losing power rapidly.

The *Genius Loci* doesn’t want its city corrupted further, so is *not* willing to ally with demons. On the other hand, angels have a less than perfect record of cooperation with ethereals . . . The spirit is therefore attempting to keep itself private, and is recruiting the most convenient people: the homeless, the dispossessed, and especially those who sleep under newspapers around old city monuments at night. These people are listening to the new “street preacher” who tells them that they have to clean up their town.

The first that celestials are likely to know about it is when they notice street people trying to scrub graffiti off the older parts of the town, and picking up litter from around local monuments. While this may attract comment, and possibly even an article in newspapers, it’s unlikely to be particularly noticed. The street people will, if questioned, say that they felt “the place needed looking after.” They won’t mention the new “street preacher” – indeed, they don’t tend to particularly *remember* him once out of his presence, only his message.

The next steps will be more violent. While the ethereal is extremely protective of his “congregation,” it feels no such compunction toward other humans, and will sacrifice them for its own ends. In order to save the city, the *Genius Loci* will work to close down trouble spots, like open pollution sources and obvious crime areas. However, its method of doing so is to excite public opinion into *acting* by causing a disaster. The ethereal will tempt children into playing in polluted streams, and entice victims into areas known for their high crime, where they are certain to be mugged or raped . . . While it has some small regret for the harm done to the innocent humans, it feels that the welfare of the city as a whole is more important. Inflammations must be made obvious so that they can be cleaned out.

“But what makes a city real? It’s real because the people who live in it love it. They dream of the ideal, and at the same time they love the imperfection which they live in. And through their love, they create the ideal. It’s all in your own hands . . .”

– Unnamed street preacher

This will be combined with an attempt to resurrect the town’s civic pride. Anonymous letters will be sent to newspapers and other avenues of the media, complaining about the town’s problems, and reminding listeners of the days when people *believed* in the place. (The ethereal would like to be able to contact town leaders and industrialists, but such people are unlikely to pay attention to what it has to say. It’s therefore working from the bottom upward.)

By now, both angels and demons will be trying to find out what’s going on. Thorough checks on recent odd events will show that a large number of them involved street people. Determined attempts to infiltrate the street people subculture or spy on them will, eventually, lead the characters to the ethereal.

The ethereal is on the watch for celestials. If approached or pursued, it will flee to the Marches, and to its own Domain – an eternal cityscape, where other ethereals like it wander, all office buildings and roads and houses full of blank-faced people. If captured and forced to parley – either on the Ethereal or the Corporeal plane – it is prepared to make some sort of deal, as long as the town itself is cared for. The longer that investigators take to find the *Genius Loci*, the longer it will have to strengthen people’s beliefs in the town and the stronger it will be.

DEJA VU

Peregrine, a bitter and unimaginative Djinn of Nightmares, is targeting a person who happens to be close to the characters; a dependent, or a Soldier, or someone they are supposed to protect. He is entering this person’s nightmares while he sleeps, and brutally torturing him night after night. This will occur several times before the characters find out about it.

However, Peregrine is *extremely* bad at original creative thought. When he starts manipulating nightmares, the Djinn automatically makes the “background” look like his current hiding-place on Earth. As this has been in the victim’s nightmares more than once, he will actually be able to describe it to his friends – or, if they enter the nightmares themselves, they will see it. (Peregrine himself will be extremely hard to catch in the dreamscape or the Marches, as he has a high Will and Perception, and will flee on the first sign of trouble.)

The obvious route for the investigators is to attempt to find the local area which fits the backdrop seen in the nightmare, and hopefully catch Peregrine there corporeally. This will involve trekking around the neighborhood, possibly bringing the victim with them, and looking for sites which match the description. Of course, wandering around and examining the neighborhood may be misinterpreted by residents.

LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

In his quest to establish further Tethers, Laurence is trying again the tactics that worked with *The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Grace* (*Liber Castellorum*, p. 84). He is attempting to foster thoroughly virtuous activity around the church of Saint Joseph, a quiet church in a relatively quiet town. However, in an attempt to divert demonic attention *elsewhere* for a while, he has sent some of his more obvious Servitors to go and make themselves publicly visible in a nearby town. Which, unfortunately, happens to be the town where the characters spend their time.

The Servitors of the Sword who are involved are sworn to secrecy, even toward other angels (as Laurence doesn’t want the information filtering through to demons accidentally). They don’t include any Seraphim, thus avoiding minor problems about truthfulness. Their task is to make it *clear* to demons that they are poking around the place, and to hint that they have come on a personal mission from Laurence to investigate something. Laurence trusts that they will divert demonic attention from the quiet little church a few towns away.

Unfortunately, the Servitors of the Sword *don’t* have any specific targets. They will therefore make a great nuisance of themselves to any neighboring angels and demons, turning over stones, disrupting working relationships, and apparently looking for something.

Demons will also be coming into town, to investigate what all the excitement is about. Local angels and demons are likely to find themselves examining the town as well, in an attempt to find whatever it is before it blows up in their faces.

Urgent requests to an Archangel for assistance or an explanation will quickly get results – a complete disclosure of Laurence’s plans. However, Laurence will insist that the truth be kept strictly quiet, and that any good excuse for his Servitors to be in town should be used. He feels that the nearby church is at a particularly sensitive stage . . . Demonic investigators, if they realize that the Servitors of the Sword are attempting to attract attention, may think to look *elsewhere*, and discover the church that Laurence is culturing. Then again, they may simply want the angels out of town, and look for a way to distract them – or to give them whatever they want. Finally, there’s always the option of just killing this extremely combat-capable group of angels of the Sword. (Laurence didn’t stint on flaming swords for the mission.) Good luck.

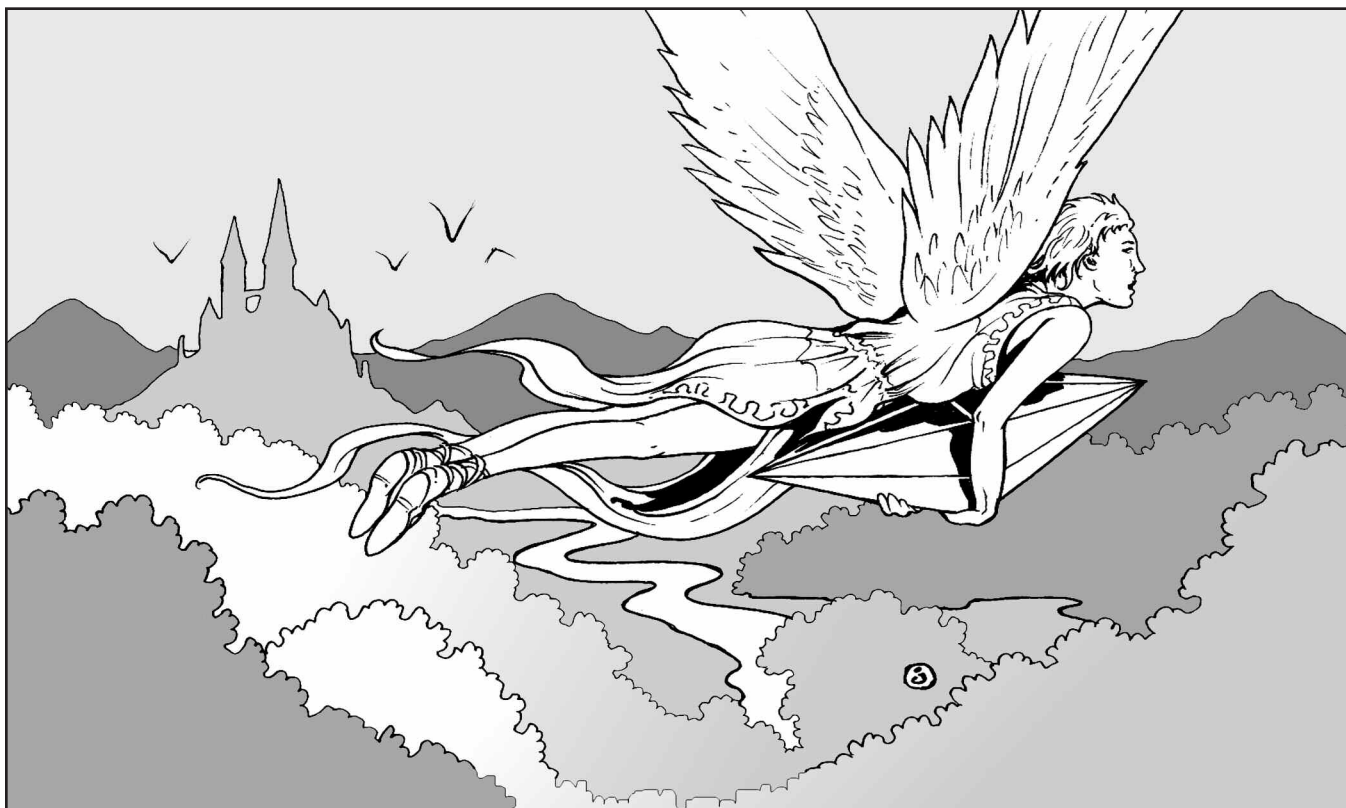
IT WAS A SOUVENIR

An angel of Dreams has been found guilty of smuggling objects from the Ethereal Domains and selling them off quietly at Marc’s Bazaar. (It has been noted that certain Servitors of Trade are highly annoyed that they’ve lost a good supplier.) The angel is now doing menial duties in Blandine’s Tower for the next few hundred years – and his latest “acquisitions” need returning.

One of them, a diamond three feet across, apparently comes from a Domain created from the dreams of magpies, which is located somewhere in the Far Marches.

Jordi, petitioned by his Ofanim, has requested that this gem should be returned to its original location. This means that some angels – whether coming from Judgement, or Animals, or Trade, or Dreams, or anybody who owes them a favor – are going to have to *take* it back. In his infinite kindness, Jordi has agreed that the soul of a young magpie will accompany the angels on this trek, to assist with communication when they reach the Magpie Domain.

Naturally, getting there will require a trek through the Vale, past the Guardians of the Vale (*The Marches*, p. 92), into the Far Marches, and finally locating the correct Domain. While the magpie soul with them is intelligent, it’s also still subject to the temptations of all magpies – food, amusement, and shiny things. Once there, the magpies present (who manifest with the wingspread of Malakim, as it’s *their* dreamscape) will demand explanations, and will be interested in anything shiny the newcomers have with them. (Wise visitors will hide such items before entering.) After the diamond has been replaced, it’s only a minor stroll back across the Far Marches – assuming the Magpie Domain hasn’t shifted position while they were inside it . . .



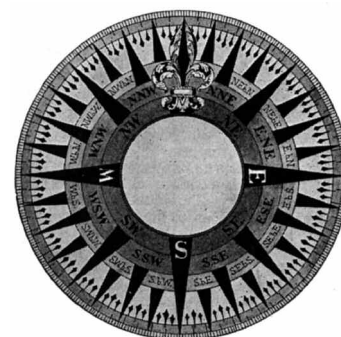
Index

Abaddon, 111.
 Adventure Seeds, 124.
 AIDS, 29-30.
 Andrealphus, Prince of Lust, 30, 49, 60, 65, 92, 104, 106, 107, 108.
 Animal souls, 76.
 Animals, 9, 20, 22-23, 64, 76; *dreams of*, 114, 126.
 Antiques, 41.
 Arachnidae, 114.
 Arcadia, 113, 119-120, 122.
 Archaic Antiques, 41.
 Archives of Kronos, 75, 99, 109.
 Armageddon, 109. See also *Judgment Day*.
 Armory, 39.
 Auctions, 62.
 Automobiles, 32-33, 34; *police cars*, 47; *rentals*, 34.
 Asmodeus, Prince of the Game, 31, 37, 44, 47, 64, 73, 95, 97, 98, 99, 105, 107, 109, 110, 115, 177.
 Baal, Prince of the War, 39, 41, 95, 96, 121.
 Bandits, 123.
 Bang Bang All Same Hardware Shop, 91.
 Bazaar, Marc's, 78, 126.
 Beleth, Princess of Nightmares, 8, 26-27, 60-61, 87, 101-102, 113, 114, 115, 116, 119-120, 121, 123, 125.
 Belial, Prince of Fire, 14, 28-29, 100-101, 103, 104, 118.
 Blandine, Archangel of Dreams, 9-10, 18, 20, 56, 87, 113, 114, 118, 123, 126.
 Bone Citadel, the, 111.
 Books and bookstores, 13, 56, 63, 69, 77, 79, 84, 99.
 Boy Scouts Hall, 42.
 Bracelet Bodyguards, 93.
 Brazil, 87.
 Brothels, 106.
 Bulletin Boards, 94.
 Bunker 666, 96.
 Butterfly Hills, the, 76.
 Callison Bay Lighthouse, 8.
 Cannabis, 57-58.
 Camp, the, 26, 115.
 Casino, 97.

Cathedral of the Sword, 91.
 Cathedrals, 75, 81, 86, 87, 89, 91.
 Caverns of David, 75, 88, 118.
 Celestial Tribunal, Dominic's, 81.
 Children, *locations frequented by*, 35, 37, 42, 56, 60; *souls of*, 76, 91, 101.
 Chthonic Chorography, 97.
 Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Grace, the, 125.
 Church of Saint Catherine, the, 54.
 Church of Saint Joseph, the, 125.
 City Airport, 43.
 City Police Department, 45.
 Clockwork Counter of the Names of God, the, 77.
 Coffee Central, 78.
 Collectable card games, 62.
 College, 24, 38.
 Commerce Park, 78.
 Committee (of the Pits), the, 103.
 Computer Science Department, 24.
 Construction, 100-101.
 Contemplation, 88.
 Controlling locations, 7.
 Corridor of Histories, the, 79.
 Council Spires, the, 81, 115.
 Country of the Teind, the, 119.
 Crag of the Guardians of the Vale, the, 120.
 Creation, the, 85-86.
 Damballah, 55.
 David, Archangel of Stone, 8, 16, 75, 88-89, 118.
Deja Vu, (adventure seed), 125.
 Dellman's Studios, 26, 116, 117.
 Dentist, 31.
 Diseases, 29.
 Disturbance, 47.
 Doctors, 29.
 Domains, 122, 125; *naming*, 113; *traveling between*, 113, 122-123.
 Dominic, Archangel of Judgment, 5, 17-18, 41, 44, 64, 73, 81-82, 84, 115.
 Dream-shades, 122.

Dreamscapes, 113, 122.
 Drugs, 16, 31-32, 36, 40, 41, 57, 116. See also *Fleurity*.
 Dry River, the, 113, 122.
 Duckpond, the, 9.
 Duct tape, 91.
 Duelling Ground, the, 83.
 Educational institutions, 24, 35, 56, 83, 94.
 Eighth Virtue, the, 10.
 Eli, Archangel of Creation, 18, 23, 26, 30-31, 49, 78, 83, 85-86, 116, 117, 118.
 Elves, 119.
 Embezzlement, 68, 71.
 England, *London*, 78.
 Entertainment, 18, 37, 85, 98, 102.
 Escher, M.C., 95, 99.
 Espionage, 13, 17, 43, 73, 94, 106-107, 118.
 Essence, 101, 114; *exchange or payment of*, 79, 92, 93, 98-99, 103, 110, 111; *theft of*, 33, 111.
 Eternal Bus Station, the, 113.
 Ethereals, *fragments*, 101-102; *language*, 113; *spirits*, 8, 52, 54-55, 64, 69, 71, 82, 113, 120, 121, 122, 124.
 Evangelical Christianity, 50.
 Fae/Faerie, 47, 118, 119-120.
 Fair Chance, the, 98.
 "Faith for Firemen," 49, 50-51.
 Fall, the, 79, 85-86, 87.
Fantasia, 26.
 Far Marches, 113, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 126; *Dark Side*, 115.
 FBI, 41.
 Fear, Word of, 87.
 Fetish Footwear, 48.
 Film awards, 104.
 Finland, 62.
 Fire Station, 49.
 Fleurity, Prince of Drugs, 57-58.
 Flying Notre Dame, the, 11.
 Foo.Bar.Com, 12.
 Food and drink, 10, 12, 37, 57, 58, 67, 78, 84, 110.
 Force Catchers, 26.
 Forge Coven, 52.
 Gabriel, Archangel of Fire, 14, 50, 51, 89-90, 111, 117, 118.
 Gambling, 68, 98, 103.
 Gangs, 19, 39.
 Garden Dinosaurs Manufacturers, 27.
 Geases, 34, 35, 93, 104.
 General Records, 81.

Gehenna, 75, 105.
Genius Loci, (adventure seed), 124.
Getting in Touch With Your Inner Archangel, 69.
 Ghosts, 71.
 Glade, Novalis', 76, 79, 86, 115, 117.
 Gladiators, 102.
 Goldenrod Bookshop, 13.
 Gourmet food, 58, 67, 99.
 Grandmother Spider, 114.
 Graveyard, the, 54.
 Great Clock, the, 99.
 Green Fields Kindergarten, 56.
 Gremlins, 93, 109, 115.
 Groves, the, 84, 88.
 Groves Basic Training, 83.
 Guardians of the Vale, 113, 119, 120-122, 126.



Guildhall of Free Lilim, 93.
 Haagenti, Prince of Gluttony, 25, 59, 67, 99, 104, 108, 110.
 Hades, 98, 100, 106.
 Halls of Creation, 85.
 Halls of Progress, 75, 77, 115.
 Hand of the Invisible, 56.
 Hardware, 91.
 Hearts, 87.
 Henderson, Simon (apparition), 71.
 Heresy, 19, 86.
 Higher Heavens, the, 91.
 History, 71, 79-80.
 Hospice, the, 117.
 Hospital, 29, 38, 40.
 Hosts of Heaven, 83.
 Hugo, Victor, 85.
 Imps, 106, 109, 115.
 Infectious Diseases Unit, 29.
 Information, See *Books*, *Libraries*, and *Research*.
 Inquisition, 64.
 Insects, 114.
 Internet, 62.
 Interrogations, 31, 95.

Inventions, 94-95.
 Investigations, 17, 73, 104.
 Islam, Sufi, 13.
It Was a Souvenir, (adventure seed), 126.
 Jail, 45-47.
 Janus, Archangel of the Wind, 11, 15, 47, 62, 79, 84.
 Jean, Archangel of Lightning, 12, 25, 26, 34, 43, 45, 46, 47, 75, 77, 90, 115.
Jonathan's, 78.
 Jordi, Archangel of Animals, 20, 22-23, 76, 114, 115.
 Judgment Day, 89. See also *Armageddon*.
 Kidnap squads, 103.
 Kites For All The Family, 15.
 Kiwi Fruit Greenhouse, the, 57.
 Kobal, Prince of Dark Humor, 38, 69, 92.
 Kronos, Prince of Fate, 10, 35-36, 44, 75, 99-100, 109, 115, 118.
 Labor Grounds, the, 100.
 Land of the Dead, Mexican, 118.
 Laundromat, 16, 41.
 Laurence, Archangel of the Sword, 11-12, 41, 50, 51, 54, 55, 60, 71-72, 81, 84, 90-91, 117, 120-122, 125-126.
 Legba, 56.
Les Miserables, 85.
 Libra Surveys, 17.
 Libraries, 56, 63, 79, 81, 99.
 Library, Yves', 79, 81, 82, 84.
Loas, 55.
Looking for Trouble, (adventure seed), 125.
 Lucifer, 81, 85, 99, 109.
 Mafia, 41.
 Magritte, Rene, 101.
 Malphas, Prince of Factions, 33, 39, 103-104.
 Manicheanism, 13.
 Maps, 30, 97, 100, 109.
 Marc, Archangel of Trade, 7, 34, 41, 59, 62, 65, 78, 85, 117, 126.
 Marches, the, 26, 109, 113, 125; *Dark*, 119. See also *Far Marches*.
 Medical/dental facilities, 29, 31, 37, 40, 57.
 Memorials, 90.
 Metro, see *Shal-Mari Metro*.
 Michael, Archangel of War, 46, 47, 69-70, 81, 83, 84, 121; *trial for pride*, 83.
 Mirchenko's, 58.
 Moss Dentistry, 31.

"Most Wanted" List, Asmodeus', 117.
 Movable Paradise, the, 84.
 Movies, 26, 37.
 Murderers, 50-51, 59, 66-67, 101-102.
 Museum of the Dreams of Murderers, the, 101.
 Museums, 71, 101.
 Naming, *Celestial locations*, 75; *Ethereal domains*, 113.
 Native Americans, 8; *Hopi*, 114.
 Navigation by concept, 113.
 Neighborhood Watch programs, 16, 53.
 Nelson's Junkyard, 60.
 Neon Palace, the, 18-20.
 New Age, 69.
 Newspapers, 72, 104-105.
 Nightmares, 101-102. See also *Beleth*.
 Novalis, Archangel of Flowers, 5, 25, 26, 67-68, 69-70, 76, 83, 86, 110, 115, 116, 117.
 Nybbas, Prince of the Media, 27, 28-29, 37, 69, 105, 106, 115.
 Nymphs, 69-70.
 Olympus, 113, 122.
 Opps Apps, 62.
 Oracles, 111.
 Outcasts, 43, 65.
 Palaces, 75.
 Palazzo Furto, 97.
 Paranormal phenomena, 63.
 Parascientific Investigations Library, 63.
 Parts, spare, 91.
 Passion Play, the, 85.
 Pax Dei, the, 81.
 Penance, 88.
 Perdition, 104.
 Pet for All Seasons, a, 20.
 Pilgrims, the, 8.
 Pits, the, 102.
 Plague, 30.
 Plants, 57, 66, 68, 87, 110.
 Police, 19, 33, 41, 44, 65, 73; *K-9 Corps*, 20. See also *City Police Department*.
 Pornography, 65.
 Porpoises, see *Dolphins*.
 Primal spirits, 52.
 Principality Papers, 104.
 Private investigators, 73.
 Progressive Banking, 65.
 Propaganda, 79, 115-116.
 Prophecy, 111.
 Public Parking Garage, 32.
 Public services, 43, 45, 49.
 Purity Crusade, the, 79, 82, 119, 120, 121, 123.



Quiet Willows, 86.
 Quik Drive, 34.
 Red Silks, 106.
 Redemption, 26, 103, 115-117.
 Relievers, 80, 115.
 Remembrances of Holy Fear, the, 87.
 Remnants, 14.
 Renegades, 19, 26, 31, 43, 64, 109, 116.
 Research, 17, 63, 73, 79, 81, 94, 96.
 Restaurants and bars, 10, 12, 58, 78, 98, 99.
 Roman Catholicism, 11, 35, 36, 53, 54, 57, 91.
 Roman Empire, 103.
 Room of Contemplation, the, 88.
 Rose Garden, the, 66.
 S&M, 49.
 Sabbats, 52.
 Safe Shopping Supermarket, 67.
 Sahara, 89.
 Saint Anthony, 56.
 St. John's Orphanage, 35.
 Saints, 9-10.
 Saminga, Prince of Death, 5, 28-29, 54-56, 111.
 Savannah, Jordi's, 76, 115.
 Seasonal Publishing, 69.
 Seelie Court, the, 119.
 Seraphim Council, the, 78.
 "Shadows," the, 123.
 Shal-Mari, 91, 98, 99, 106-107, 108, 109, 110.
 Shal-Mari Metro, 75, 108-110.
 Sheol, 100-101, 104, 105.
 Shipping, 65.
 Simon Henderson Local History Museum, the, 71-72.
 Skilled labor, 100-101.
 Society for Creative Anachronism, 25.
 Soldiers, 43; *of God*, 31-32, 41, 56, 59, 60-61, 90-91, 102, 114; *of Hell*, 26, 36, 41, 59, 60-61; *Pagan*, 55-56, 69-70.
 Sorcerers, 52, 56-57.
 Sorcery, 56, 64.
 Soul Links, 52.
 Soul Yards, 100.
 Spies and spying, see *Espionage*.
 Stardust Cineplex, 37.
 Stygia, 97, 102, 104.
 Subliminals, 26.
 Subway, 108-110.

Suicide Prevention Center, 38.
 Suffering Succotash, 110.
 Supplies, construction, 100.
 Talking Heads, the, 111.
 Tartarus, 94-95, 96, 108.
 Tension, dramatic, 7.
 Tethers, 5, 7, 8, 26, 34, 44, 54, 116, 117, 125.
 Theatres, 37, 85.
 Tiend, the, 119.
 Tombstone Arms, 39.
 Tools, 91.
 Torture, 31, 110-111.
 Tower, *of Dreams*, 87, 126; *of Nightmares*, 101, 119.
 Transportation, 11, 34, 43, 108, 122.
 Travel, *between Celestial locations*, 75; *between Ethereal domains*, 113.
 Triads, 18, 42.
 University, 24, 38.
 Unseelie Court, 119, 123.
 Uphill Market Clothes Shop, 21.
 Uriel, Archangel of Purity, 5, 79, 82, 120-122, 123.
 Vale of Dreams, the, 113, 119, 120.
 Valefor, Prince of Theft, 34, 41, 47, 62, 97, 103, 108.
 Vampires, 113.
 Vanishing Rooms, the, 89.
 Vanx Pharmacy, 40.
 Vapula, Prince of Technology, 13, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 37, 40, 94-95, 96, 105, 108, 109, 110, 115.
 Vegetables, 110.
 Video games, 18-20.
 Visions, 87, 90.
 Volcano, Gabriel's, 89-90.
 Voudoun, 54-56.
 Wall of Names, the, 90.
 Wave Point Cove, 22.
 Weapons, 39, 41, 47, 92, 95, 103, 109.
 Wendigo, 8.
 Will shackles, 103.
 Wilson Private Detectives, 73.
 Wicca, 52.
 Wiccan Rede, 52.
 Words, 87, 99.
 Worship, Places of, 8, 52, 54.
 Yves, Archangel of Destiny, 21-22, 41, 64, 79, 81, 84, 85, 113, 117.
 Zoroastrianism, 13.

STUCK FOR AN ADVENTURE? NO PROBLEM.

**e23 sells high-quality game adventures
and supplements in PDF format.**

- Get complete sample adventures free for *GURPS*, *In Nomine*, and *Traveller*!
- PDFs from the major players in online publishing: Ronin Arts, Ken Hite, Atlas Games, and 01 Games.
- New gems from up-and-coming publishers, like Atomic Sock Monkey Press and Expeditious Retreat Press.
- Digital editions of out-of-print classics, from *Orcslayer* and the complete run of *ADQ* to *GURPS China* and *GURPS Ice Age*.
- Fully searchable files of *GURPS Fourth Edition* supplements.
- Original material for *Transhuman Space* and *In Nomine*, with new *GURPS* supplements from Phil Masters, David Pulver, Sean Punch, and William Stoddard!
- Buy it once, have it always. Download your purchases again whenever you need to.



Download ● Print ● Play

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

e23 is part of Warehouse 23, the online store at Steve Jackson Games.
Warehouse 23 is also the official Internet retailer for Atlas Games, Ninja Burger, and many other publishers.
Visit us today at www.warehouse23.com for all your game STUFF!